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Heroes of the Nations

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THE HERO'S DEEDS AND HARD-WON
FAME SHALL LIVE.

WILLIAM PITT
EARL OF CHATHAM

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STATUE OF LORD CHATHAM, IN ST. STEPHEN'S HALL WESTMINSTER.

BY D. MACDOWELL, R.A.

WILLIAM PITT

EARL OF CHATHAM

AND

THE GROWTH AND DIVISION OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

1708–1778

BY

WALFORD DAVIS GREEN, M.P.

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

NEW YORK
27 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET

LONDON
24 BEDFORD STREET, STRAND

The Knickerbocker Press

1901

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The Knickerbocker Press, New York

TO MY MOTHER

WITH LOVE AND GRATITUDE

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK

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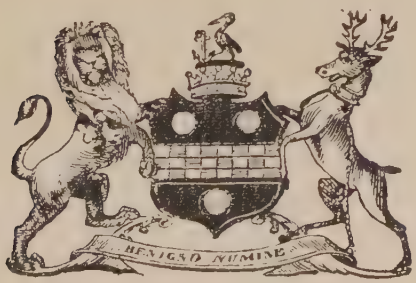


COAT OF ARMS.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is no good biography of Lord Chatham; *The History of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, published in 1827 by the Rev. Francis Thackeray, and the *Anecdotes* collected by Almon the Printer, are both of them fragmentary and erratic. The former served as a text for Lord Macaulay's famous essays, which are the most spirited accounts of Chatham's career. In Mr. Lecky's *History of England in the Eighteenth Century* there is a sketch of Chatham's life, and I desire to acknowledge the obligation which every writer on this period must owe to that great work. The *Correspondence of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham*, edited by the executors of his son, exasperates the student by its omissions, but is none the less a valuable collection. It is to be hoped that the full correspondence will one day be given to the world. I have to thank Lord Lansdowne for permitting me to use some volumes of his Manuscripts, and Lord Edward Fitzmaurice, M.P., for valuable suggestions, and for the great courtesy and kindness with which he has assisted me. The period is peculiarly rich in political memoirs, and I have given references to the

authorities quoted in the text. The letters and chronicles of Horace Walpole are no doubt, to some extent, malicious and at times inaccurate, but as a vivid contemporary criticism, by a writer of insight and discernment thoroughly conversant with affairs, they are a mine of information as well as a treasure-house of delightful reading. It is unnecessary to enumerate the other memoirs, and the many volumes published by the Historical Manuscripts Commission, which throw light upon Chatham. Most of these, it may be noted, have been published since the date of Thackeray's *Life* and Macaulay's *Essays*. The vast collection, in the British Museum, of the Duke of Newcastle's papers is of very great value. So also is Sir William Anson's recently published edition of the Duke of Grafton's *Journal*.

Among the innumerable works of a more general character dealing with Chatham's period, those who desire to follow in detail the military and naval operations which he planned will find the results of the most recent research embodied in the *History of the Royal Navy*, edited by Mr. Laird Clowes, and the *History of the British Army*, by the Hon. J. W. Fortescue. Of the war in America the best account is in the brilliant writings of Parkman. Entick's *History of the Late War* (1764, five volumes) contains contemporary accounts of many battles, but is often misleading. Carlyle, in his *Frederick the Great*, pronounces several characteristic eulogies upon Frederick's ally. The diplomatic history of the period is admirably recounted in Mr. Waddington's two volumes, *Louis XV et le Renversement des Alliances*

(Paris, 1896) and *La Guerre de Sept Ans, Des Débuts* (Paris, 1899). Professor Ward's *Great Britain and Hanover* (Oxford, 1899) illuminates much that is perplexing in English policy.

As regards the latter half of Chatham's life, and his connection with the resistance of the American colonies, the *History of America* edited by Dr. Winsor is the most comprehensive authority. I desire especially to mention two recent works illustrating this period: *The Literary History of the American Revolution: 1763–1783*, by Professor Coit Tyler, and *A Short History of British Colonial Policy*, by Mr. H. E. Egerton. A brochure by Herr von Raville, *William Pitt und Graf Bute* (Berlin, 1895), sets forth a novel and interesting theory of the connection between the two men, and attempts to prove that Bute as well as Pitt was prosecuting a national policy. An ingenious American writer and an Irish scholar have sought to show that Lord Chatham was the author of the *Junius* letters, but I have resisted the temptation to discuss their theory.

I have also to thank Sir Benjamin Stone, M.P., for permission to use the photographs taken by himself of the Chatham and Mansfield statues in St. Stephen's Hall, Westminster.

June, 1900. W. D. G.

WILLIAM PITT.

CHAPTER I.

ENTRANCE INTO POLITICS.

1708–1737.

WILLIAM PITT was born on November 15, 1708, in the parish of St. James, Westminster. Industrious research has traced his descent from one Nicholas Pitt, who flourished under Henry VII., but the real founder of the family appears to have been John Pitt, a Clerk of the Exchequer in the reign of Elizabeth. The Pitts were settled at Blandford, in Dorsetshire, and in Cornwall. The great-grandson of John Pitt was Governor of Fort St. George and of Jamaica, and the fortunate possessor of the famous Pitt diamond.* He was selected as Governor of Madras, says the historian of the East Indian Company, on account of his known energy and ability, to put an end to dissensions and irregularities in that Presidency.

* The stone was sold in 1717 to the Regent Orleans at a profit of £100,000.

He married Jane Innes, who was directly descended from the Earl of Murray, natural son of James V. of Scotland. In the days of Pitt's glory, Scotsmen, with their keen genealogical instinct, were able to point to this strain in his blood as an explanation of all that was loftiest in his character. Governor Pitt purchased the borough of Old Sarum and himself sat in the House of Commons as its representative. His eldest son, Robert, married the sister of an Irish peer, the Earl of Grandison, and their second son, William, was the subject of this history. The most important political connection of the family was with the Stanhopes, Lucy, daughter of Governor Pitt, being the wife of James, Earl Stanhope.

We know very little of Pitt's parents, but some of the family letters shed light upon their character.* The proceedings of his wife and children led Governor Pitt to send very irascible letters from Madras, but there is much good sense, patriotism, and morality mixed up with his diatribes. "God send a miracle to save Old England at last," he prays in the midst of the Marlborough wars. He held stern views on the virtue of economy at election times.

"I have heard," he writes to his son, "in what a manner you went down to Old Sarum against the election; sent down a man cook some time before; coach and six; five or six in liveries; open house for three or four months, and put me to about £500 charge. Where was the need of this? It never cost me above £10, which was for a dinner the day of election. I had a house in London which stood me in £120 per annum,

* Hist. MSS. Comm. (*Dropmore MSS.*).

kept coach and horses, servants and all answerable, always three or four good dishes of meat at my table, as good wines as the world afforded, and plenty. It never exceeded £1000 per annum."

In politics he was a fierce anti-Jacobite, and instilled into his son views of Parliamentary honesty which were rigorously followed by his grandson. "If you are in Parliament show yourself on all occasions a good Englishman. Avoid faction, and never enter the House prepossessed. I had rather any child of mine want than have him get his bread by voting in the House of Commons."

Robert Pitt wrote, informing his father of his marriage:

"You always advised me against a disreputable marriage, which I have avoided by marrying a lady of family and character, with the approval of my mother and of Uncle Curgenven. Her fortune is but £2000 and £1000 more after the death of her father-in-law, Lieut. General Stewart. I hope I shall not be abandoned by you at a time when I have no other support but yourself, since my alliance with the greatest families in England is as much to your credit as my wife will be a comfort to you when you know her. My present happiness is altogether due to you, as it was the universal report of your good and generous character that induced Lady Grandison to give me her daughter. Her age is twenty-one, her portrait and letter herewith speak for themselves; and I hope to obtain some genteel employment by the intercession of her relations."

A friend, evidently employed to assist in reconciling the stern parent, wrote at the same time:

"Your gentlemanly son Mr. Robert Pitt does indeed deserve the character of a very ingenious person, of very quick parts. He cannot be wanting in giving you a particular account of his marriage, and therefore I have only to tell you that the lady is as beautiful, as sensible and as well-behaved as most I have seen in my life. They reside in Golden Square."

Governor Pitt lived till his grandson William was eighteen, and several references to the boy in these letters show that his grandfather entertained a fondness for him. The personal knowledge of England's far possessions which Governor Pitt possessed may have wakened in the future statesman that instinctive regard for the Empire which always characterised him. This was perhaps as valuable a gift as the annuity of £100 which was left him by the Governor's will.

Pitt was sent to Eton, but the turbulent life of a public school in the eighteenth century possessed no charm for him.

"Mr. William Pitt," wrote Shelburne, in that masterpiece of malicious criticism, his character of Pitt, "was by all accounts a very singular character from the time he went to Eton, where he was distinguished and must have had a very early turn of observation, by his telling me that his reason for preferring private to public education was that he scarce observed a boy who was not cowed for life, at Eton; that a public school might suit a boy of a turbulent, forward disposition, but would not do where there was any gentleness." *

* Fitzmaurice's *Shelburne* i. 72.

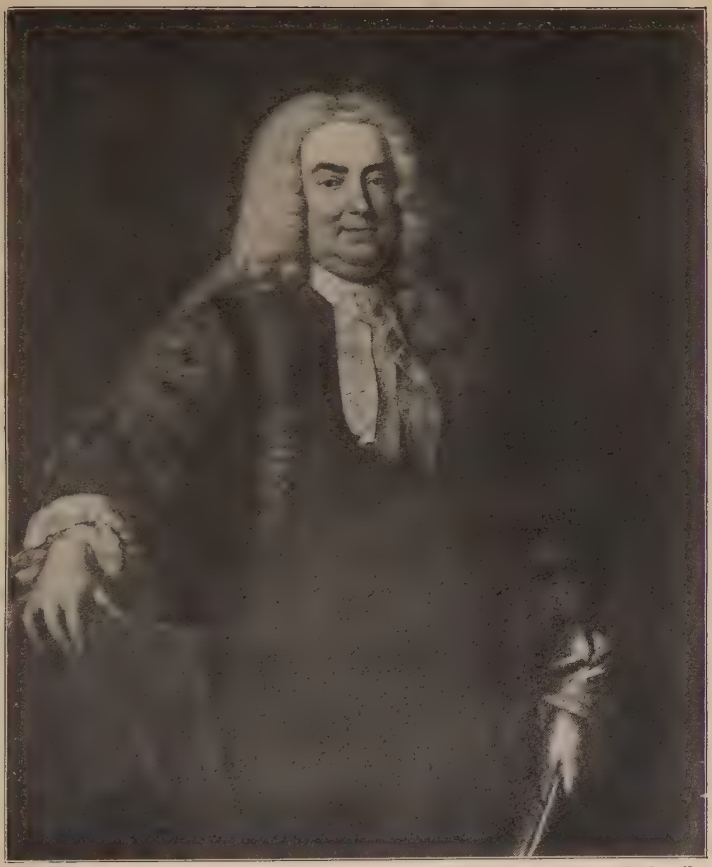
The malady which racked his body and mind through life attacked Pitt while at school, and at the age of sixteen he made his first acquaintance with gout. At Eton began his historic friendship with George Lyttleton, and among other contemporaries were his future rival Henry Fox, Fielding, and Charles Hanbury Williams. He proceeded to Trinity College, Oxford, and continued those classical studies which deeply influenced his mind. Writing, in later life, to his nephew, he extolled the advantage of a literary education, praising especially the great names of Homer and Virgil.

"I hope you taste and love those authors particularly. You cannot read them too much; they are not only the two greatest poets, but they contain the first lessons for your age to imbibe; lessons of honour, courage, disinterestedness, love of truth, command of temper, gentleness of behaviour, humanity and in one word, virtue in its true signification." *

Pitt in fact drew from the Latin writers a Roman hardiness and unflinching patriotism, and if we may take the educational advice he gave to his nephew as evidence of his own studies, we may conclude that the poetry of Rome, the history of England, and the philosophy of Locke were the master influences upon his mind. He admired Locke with the true Whig fervour, and adopted the Whig view of the seventeenth century. At Oxford his health was worse than at Eton, and he left to make the grand tour without taking a degree.

* *Chatham Correspondence*, i., 62.

On his return he found himself at the threshold of a career with very restricted means, but with many influential friends and relatives. His elder brother had just been elected for both Okehampton and Old Sarum, and he decided to sit for the former place and to bring in William Pitt as junior member for Old Sarum. Thus occurred that paradoxical conjunction of the most famous representative of the people with the most notorious of rotten boroughs. Pitt proposed to adopt a military as well as political career, and obtained a cornetcy in the Blues. It was in 1735 that he entered the House of Commons, which was then ruled by the strong will and rude mind of Sir Robert Walpole. The general election of the previous year had been fought with great eagerness on both sides, as the excise scheme of 1733 had shaken the Ministry to its foundations. But Walpole returned with a safe majority. He had quarrelled with every colleague who had shown any dangerous brilliancy, with Pulteney and Carteret and Townshend, and still remained the sole Minister with power, using with complacency the great influence and mediocre talents of the Pelhams, and the somewhat trivial ingenuity of his brother Horace, governing the King through the Queen, and controlling the House of Commons by means of frank corruption. In foreign affairs he had reversed the old Whig policy of hostility to France, and had sought peace and ensued it to the verge of ignominy. During his stretch of power the century-long struggle between England and France almost ceased,—as the result



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SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

FROM THE PAINTING BY J. B. VAN LOO (1740) IN THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

in part of the Orleans regency,—but if Walpole spared his country the horrors of that struggle it was largely because his mind did not grasp the meaning of the long rivalry for empire. The instinct of the people desired national expansion, and before Walpole fell he had been forced to abandon in despair his policy of peace and to engage in a war that was concerned nominally with "Jenkins's ear" and Spanish atrocities, but in reality with the sovereignty of the West. In home affairs Walpole's healthy common-sense had proved invaluable, and his preservation of peace had enabled the country to recover from the exhaustion that followed Marlborough's wars and the South Sea madness. He had buttressed the throne of the Hanoverian dynasty and won many of the country gentlemen from the Jacobite cause. Advance in prosperity, the enjoyment of a sensible freedom, the absence of any formidable religious or economic cause of division, made Walpole's earlier administration acceptable to the people at large, and only when he touched their pockets by an excise scheme, or wounded their pride by appearing pusillanimous, did he rouse any considerable opposition outside the narrow political class which composed the Parliament.

But within Parliament Walpole had many vigorous and untiring critics. The nominal division between Whigs and Tories remained, but the cause of this division had almost disappeared. There were many adherents of the exiled Stuarts, there was endless intrigue on their behalf, but the Tory party

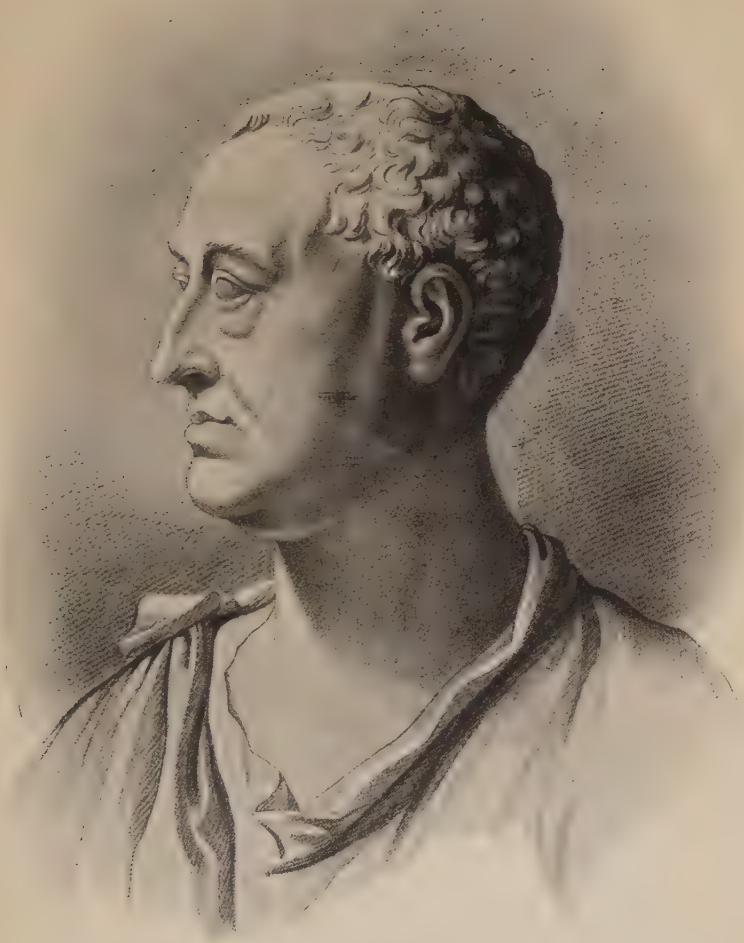
was by no means exclusively or actively Jacobite. It was not strong numerically, and could have formed no effective opposition against any minister supported by the Whigs as a whole. For the most part, the Tories were more interested in sport than in politics, but they possessed two leaders of great ability, Sir William Wyndham and Shippen. Walpole himself said that Shippen was beyond corruption, and his known probity gave him much influence, while Wyndham was a brilliant orator and wit, and a man of charming and attractive personality. The sting of the opposition was in the "factions," in the power of those Whigs who had committed the original sin of schism, and still proclaimed that the true Catholic Whig doctrines were their own. At their head in the Commons was Pulteney, the first great leader of opposition whom the House had known; while in the Lords, Carteret, another of Walpole's dismissed colleagues, powerfully and incessantly opposed the Minister's measures, and received effective aid from the elaborate invective of Chesterfield. Carteret and Walpole really differed in principle on foreign policy, the former clinging to the old system of William III., the latter substituting neutrality and diplomacy for active hostilities; but until the Spanish question introduced new considerations the difference of principle in foreign policy was in abeyance, and the Parliamentary conflicts really meant that a grasping of immoderate power had produced an immoderate opposition. Walpole kept the Whigs in office for a quarter of a century, but at the same time he divided the party

into fragments, and it was this division which made it powerless to resist Bute, when that man of destiny arrived in 1761.

Outside Parliament, Bolingbroke suggested plots, inspired invective, wrote pamphlets, and attracted adherents, against the Minister whose pedestrian industry had defeated his own genius, who had exiled him and recalled him, and had inflicted upon his pride the last indignity of pardon. It was Bolingbroke who united the discordant factions of Wyndham, Carteret, and Pulteney; his brilliant patriotism attracted the young politicians of the day as strongly as Walpole's cynicism repelled them, his literary fame and genius fascinated the young writers to whom Walpole was only "Bob, the poet's foe." The *Idea of a Patriot King* helped to form the stubborn mind of George III., and inflamed the vanity of George III.'s father. Prince Frederick was a tower of strength to the Opposition, but the quarrel in the royal family strangely enough strengthened the dynasty. It was possible to be in opposition to Government without being a foe to the House of Brunswick. The heir to the throne himself lent his name and influence to those who were intriguing against his father's servant, and the personal discontents and disappointments created by Walpole sent men not to Jacobitism but to the Court of the Prince of Wales.

Pitt entered Parliament at the age of twenty-seven, as one of the "Cobham cousinhood," a small band of young men which was the precursor of the famous Grenville connection. The chief members

at this time were Sir George Lyttleton and Richard Grenville, afterwards Lord Temple. Lyttleton enjoyed the privilege of being among the poets whose lives were written by Dr. Johnson, but it was his work on the conversion of St. Paul rather than his poetry which the great critic selected for praise. In politics he is remembered chiefly as the friend of Pitt; a man of grave and serious nature, he appears musing and abstracted among his more eager and violent contemporaries. He could express in periods of proper weight principles that had stood the test of time, and was impressive in debate when the occasion favoured a prepared oration. In these early days he and Pitt were inseparable, and the man of carefully cultivated talent and sober temperament was an admirable counsellor for the man of restless and hasty genius. Richard Grenville remained the intimate of Pitt for a much longer period than Lyttleton. A certain arrogance and overbearing will, a rather boisterous assertion of extended claims, were doubtful features in his character, and no man ever used the lower instruments of politics with less hesitation. None the less the future Lord Temple was immovably honest in purpose, faithful in friendship, and generous to those whom he trusted. George Grenville, his brother, joined the party in 1741, and brought to it a great share of Parliamentary talent and industry, with fixed principles of Whig doctrine which were to be applied in a spirit of legalism to every occasion. If we may judge from his diary, there was never any close sympathy between him and Pitt, and the natures of



LORD BOLINGBROKE.

FROM THE BUST BY RYSBRACK.

the two men were wholly diverse. The leader of this band, Lord Cobham, had quarrelled with Walpole, and had been deprived of his regiment of horse, with the result that he occupied an important place in the circle of the Prince of Wales.

In his youth, Pitt is said to have been strikingly handsome; we have the assurance of Chesterfield that he was very well-bred, and possessed the ancient grace and courtliness of manner. His face, with its hawked nose and piercing eyes, was that of a man born to rule; his voice filled the House and was heard in the farthest corners, even when it sank to a whisper; his gesture was impressive and dramatic. He made his first speech on April 29, in support of an address to the Crown moved by Pulteney on the occasion of the Prince of Wales's marriage. This first effort received from Tindal, a contemporary annalist, extravagant praise, but there is nothing in the recorded reports to distinguish it from other courtly efforts. These first speeches, however, must have shown some promise of the speaker's future greatness, as they received characteristic notice from Walpole. "We must muzzle this terrible cornet of horse," said the Minister, and dismissed Pitt from his regiment.

"The King, two days ago," wrote Lady Irwin to Lord Carlisle, on May 20, 1737, "turned out Mr. Pitt from a cornetcy for having voted and spoken in Parliament contrary to his approbation; he is a young man of no fortune, a very pretty speaker, one the Prince is particular to, and under the tuition of my Lord Cobham. The army is all alarmed at this, and 't is said it will

hurt the King more than his removing my Lord Stairs and Lord Cobham, since it is making the whole army dependent by descending to resent a vote from the lowest commission." *

Lyttleton administered consolation to his friend in bad verse:

> "Long had thy virtues marked thee out for fame,
> Far, far superior to a Cornet's name;
> This generous Walpole saw, and grieved to find
> So mean a post disgrace the human mind;
> The servile standard from the free-born hand
> He took and bade thee lead the patriot band."

A great trial of strength took place on a motion by Pulteney praying the King to settle £100,000 a year on the Prince of Wales. This was strongly opposed by Walpole, who dreaded the independence which this income would have conferred upon the successor. Pitt supported the motion in a speech which was not reported, but he was evidently advancing in influence, as he was singled out for attack in Walpole's press. The extract is worth quoting as an example of the political writing of those days.

"A young man of my acquaintance," said the *Gazetteer*, "through an overbearing disposition, and a weak judgment, assuming the character of a great man, which he is in no way able to support, is become the object of ridicule instead of praise. My young man has the vanity to put himself in the place of Tully. But let him consider that everyone who has the same natural imperfections with Tully, has not therefore the same natural

* Hist. MSS. Comm. (*Carlisle MSS.*).

perfections, though his neck should be as long, his body as slender, yet his voice may not be as sonorous, his action may not be as just."

The *Craftsman*, duly defending Pitt, pointed out how much Athens would have lost if Demosthenes had been discouraged in his youth by similar strictures.

The quarrel between King and Prince was at its height in the summer of 1737, as in this year the Prince removed the Princess from Hampton Court immediately before her confinement, an act intended as an insult to his father. Expelled from Court, the Prince of Wales set up a separate household, and appointed Pitt and Lyttleton his groom of the bedchamber and private secretary. The intimacy between Pitt and the Prince at this time is illustrated by a story told by Charles Butler in his *Reminiscences*.

"The Prince of Wales and Mr. Pitt were walking in the gardens of Stowe apart from the general company, who followed them at some distance. They were engaged in earnest conversation, when Lord Cobham expressed his apprehension to one of his guests that Mr. Pitt would draw the Prince into some measures of which his Lordship disapproved. The gentleman observed that the *tête-à-tête* could not be of long duration. 'Sir,' said Lord Cobham, with eagerness, 'you don't know Mr. Pitt's talent of insinuation; in a very short quarter of an hour he can persuade any man of anything.'"

The year did not end before a serious blow had fallen on Walpole by the death of the Queen. No

more remarkable woman appeared in royal circles throughout the eighteenth century. She had devoted herself to the King, enduring slights to her pride and agonies of body rather than miss one opportunity of influence ; a wise counsellor, an astute diplomatist, she was full of intelligence, and, recognising Walpole's worth, had been unbrokenly loyal to her alliance with him. Thus the Minister was deprived of his truest friend at the moment when a crisis in foreign affairs was impending.

CHAPTER II.

WALPOLE, CARTERET, AND PELHAM.

1738–1754.

A DETAILED examination of Pitt's early career in Parliament would be of little value. It presented those features of extravagance and inconsistency which are rarely absent from the records of those who are compelled to force their own passage to the front. The main interest of these years, spent in winning the force and prestige essential for the attainment of power, is in the attitude Pitt adopted towards Walpole, Carteret, and Pelham and their differing policies. In considering that attitude we shall find, in the midst of declamation and invective, hints and foreshadowings of the national policy in which Pitt believed from first to last, which he himself in later years carried to a triumphant issue.

The first great question that came before Parliament in Pitt's time was the rivalry between England and Spain for the commerce of the New World. It was this which brought to an issue the long disputes on Walpole's foreign policy, and finally

accomplished the great Peace Minister's fall. The keynote of his policy had been friendship with France, and this had been practicable so long as France and Spain were divided. In 1733, however, the natural union between the two Bourbon Crowns had been renewed by a Family Compact; this treaty of the Escurial was the true origin of the war of the Polish succession, which had been in effect a Bourbon invasion of Italy, and Walpole had only avoided intervention in that war by the greatest exertions. When, in 1738, the commercial rivalry between England and Spain became acute, Walpole, seeing in the background the great family alliance against British interests, desired to avoid war. Here, however, he was dealing with a matter on which the English people could not be restrained. They saw their trade restricted and their Empire threatened, and if they had known, as Walpole knew, the terms of the Family Compact, they would have been only the more eager for war. France had agreed to assist Spain with all her force by land or sea, if Spain should suspend England's enjoyment of commerce and her other advantages. The privileges which England enjoyed under the Treaty of Utrecht were the monopoly of the slave-trade between Africa and Spanish-America, and the right to send one merchant ship to the annual fair of the Spanish settlements. The one legal ship was accompanied by many others, and a large smuggling-trade was carried on. Spain retaliated by a violent use of her right of free search, and many stories of cruelty and torture practised on English sailors were brought

home. The Opposition eagerly adopted these stories, and encouraged the demand for war. Walpole at first minimised the English grievances, and then tried to frighten Spain into submission, but in the end he was compelled to declare war.

Pitt had been among the most vehement of the Opposition, and his speeches won him fame. The Family Compact, which was renewed in 1743 and 1761, had reaffirmed those Spanish ambitions in the New World against which England fought in this war. This agreement is of the greatest importance in the understanding of Pitt's career. It was the fulfilment of those prospective dangers against which William III. and Marlborough fought. Walpole fell because he either regarded it too little or dreaded it too much, but from Pitt's mind it was never absent. It appears in his first important speech and in the last sentence he spoke in Parliament. He attempted to nullify it when he first obtained power by making large offers to Spain; he disarmed it of its terrors by crushing France, and resigned because at the moment of its renewal, in 1761, he was not allowed to crush Spain also. His instinctive perception of the fact that extensive empire for England could only be won by defeat of the Bourbons made him the greatest of War Ministers, and his conviction that the Bourbons would seek and obtain their revenge, when the Empire was hazarded by civil war, made him the true adviser of his country in that hour of perilous unwisdom.

Those who demanded war in 1739 have often been denounced, and it cannot be pretended that

England had any moral ground to go upon. But the wars of the eighteenth century were not moral wars, and a purely ethical judgment upon international affairs is rarely exhaustive. The question at issue was whether Spain remained sufficiently powerful to keep the position she had won as an American Power, and the only way in which such a question could be raised and answered was by a challenge to arms. As Adam Smith said, the war was a colony war, and, whatever the pretexts, the real object was empire and commerce. It was an incident in the long struggle for America. "When trade is at stake," said Pitt, "it is your last entrenchment; you must defend it or perish." He pointed to the English fleet, and the two million people in England's American colonies, and declared that a war in America must prove fatal to Spain. But Europe, he told Walpole, sees that Spain has talked to you like your master. If the war had been properly conducted it would have realised the gains anticipated, but it was ill-managed, and was obscured by the European war in which it was merged, and as it was a war without glory it has remained a favourite subject of condemnation.

It was in March, 1740, that Pitt made the answer to Horace Walpole the elder which was polished by Samuel Johnson in his garret into the classical retort of youth upon age. Pitt, defending himself against the atrocious crime of being a young man, declared, according to Johnson, that "much more is he to be abhorred, who, as he has advanced in age, has receded from virtue, and becomes more

wicked with less temptation." According to the story told by Lord Sydney, whose father was present,

"Mr. Pitt got up with great warmth, beginning with these words: 'With the greatest reverence to the grey hairs of the honourable gentleman!' Mr. Walpole pulled off his wig, and showed his head covered with grey hairs; which occasioned a general laughter in which Mr. Pitt joined, and all warmth immediately subsided." *

The general election of 1741 proved fatal to Walpole, who resigned office and became Lord Orford, and an administration was formed by a coalition between the Pelhams and Carteret. Pulteney declined office and became Earl of Bath. The Tories, Chesterfield, and the Cobham cousinhood were passed over. There had been an angry demand for the impeachment of Walpole, and this question played a considerable part in the negotiations which led to Carteret's becoming Secretary of State.

In connection with these negotiations, there is a story which, if true, is very little to the credit of the small party of Pitt, Lyttleton, and the Grenvilles. As a matter of fact, the story rests on slight and biassed testimony, and there is a somewhat remarkable absence of confirmation. Its origin is to be found in

* Coxe's *Horace, Lord Walpole*, ii., 184. The Prince of Wales showed his appreciation of one of Pitt's speeches in a remarkable manner. "The Prince," wrote a member, "kissed Mr. Pitt in the House for his speech, which was very pretty and more scurrilous." Coxe's *Sir R. Walpole*, iii., 609.

the pages of Glover, the author of *Leonidas* and of *Hosier's Ghost*.*

"In June, 1747, when Don Carlos (*i. e.*, the Prince of Wales) was complaining of the ill-treatment he had received from Mr. Lyttleton, Pitt, and the Grenvilles and others, he added that to his certain knowledge Mr. Lyttleton had sent a letter to Sir Robert Walpole by the hands of Colonel Selwyn's son, offering terms: among other particulars, taking upon himself to answer for Don Carlos; that this letter was sent previous to any accommodation between Walpole and Pulteney, but was received with the utmost contempt by Walpole; and it is certain, if Pulteney deserves any share of credit, that he has constantly accused that part of the Opposition, under which Lyttleton was enlisted, of making the first overtures to the minister and consequently compelling him, by their treachery, to precipitate the treaty. . . . Dr. Ayscough told me that he and Colonel Lyttleton were present at the meeting of Lyttleton and young Mr. Selwyn; that Mr. Lyttleton opened with offering a secure retreat to Sir Robert Walpole, upon which Dr. Ayscough went out of the room taking the Colonel with him, and left the other two to themselves. The Colonel confirmed this account of Ayscough to me more than once."

The story is thus told with great appearance of circumstantiality, but there are difficulties in the way of its acceptance, and it must be remembered that Glover had a strong dislike of Lyttleton, and that the Prince of Wales in 1747 was at the height

* *Memorials of a Literary Character* (1814), p. 4, n.

of his animosity against Pitt. Coxe, the biographer of Walpole, who had so vast a knowledge of the private papers of this period, evidently knew of no confirmation to the story, as he does not mention it in his earlier edition, but only in that of 1816, when Glover is quoted as authority. It is still further remarkable that Horace Walpole, who at this time was living with his father in constant confidence and would have greatly relished such a piece of news about Lyttleton and Pitt and Grenville, makes no mention of any such offer having been made. But above all it is curious that Walpole should have rejected the offer contemptuously, as some three weeks before his fall he had sent a message through Bishop Secker to the Prince, offering him an additional £50,000 a year if he would desist from opposition. The Prince's reply was to the effect that he would listen to no proposals so long as Walpole continued in power.*

This does not preclude the possibility of such an offer as Lyttleton is said to have made, as Lyttleton proposed not to support Walpole in power, but to screen him after his fall. Walpole may have felt secure against punishment when he persuaded the King to send for Pulteney on the condition that he himself should be protected, but the danger of an impeachment was great enough to make the Prince's support very valuable. Walpole told the King he must retire on February 1st, but the final division on the Chippenham election did not take place until

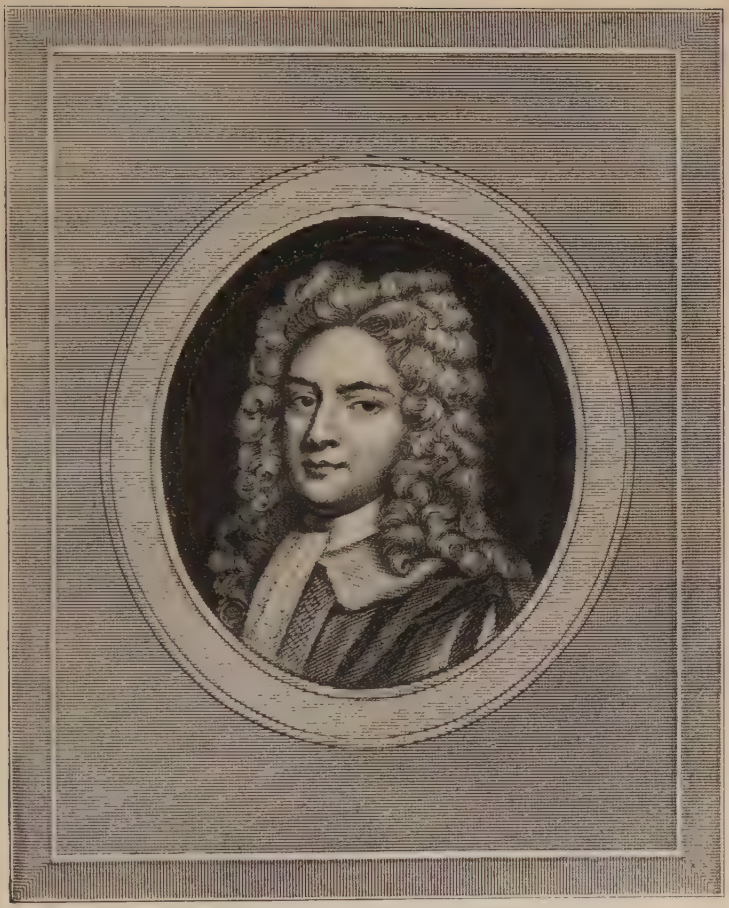
* Edw. Walpole to Devonshire, January 9, 1742, Coxe's *Sir R. Walpole*.

February 2d, and before the division took place the Prime Minister sent word to the Prince of his intention to resign. After the resignation the Court made further overtures, and the Prince, to whom the additional £50,000 was granted, and places offered for two of his friends, gave an interview to Walpole on February 6th, and assured him of his protection in case of attack. Nevertheless we find Horace Walpole writing on February 9th:

"All is in confusion; *no overtures from the Prince*, who, it must seem, proposes to be King. His party have persuaded him not to make up, but on much greater conditions than he first demanded; in short, notwithstanding his professions to the Bishop (Secker) he is to insist on the impeachment of Sir Robert, saying now that his terms not being accepted at first, he is not bound to stick to them. He is pushed on to this violence by Argyle, Chesterfield, Cobham, Sir John Hinde Cotton, and Lord Marchmont." *

Thus the action of the Prince during the crisis seems to have been, first, a refusal to deal with Walpole till after his fall; secondly, an interview on February 6th, in which he agreed to screen the Minister on condition of the £50,000 and places for two of his friends; and, thirdly, a demand for further places. It is certainly almost incredible that Lyttleton should have made his offer to Walpole without first sounding the Prince, but when during these days would the Prince have sanctioned such an

* *Letters of Horace Walpole*, ed. by Peter Cunningham (1886), i., 125.



THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.

FROM THE PAINTING BY BENTLEY.

offer? It was clearly to his advantage to wait, knowing as he did Walpole's anxiety to come to terms, until the Court made overtures to him. There is, moreover, a certain inherent improbability in the suggestion that Pitt and Lyttleton should have gone behind the back of Pulteney, who had arrived at his hour of influence, in order to court the favour of Walpole at the moment of his fall. The whole story, when considered in the light of the Prince's conduct, is shadowy and mystifying, and certainly demands more cogent testimony than the recollections of Glover, or the word of Frederick, Prince of Wales. *

In the new Government there were three important Ministers who had been colleagues of Walpole, and remained as leaders of the Walpole party. The Duke of Newcastle was the greatest master of political patronage known in English history. He was Secretary of State from 1724 to 1754, and the nominal chief Minister, except for a very brief interval, from 1754 to 1762. A ready debater, skilful in negotiation, flexible in conviction, constantly embarrassed by a superfluity of irrelevant considerations and alarmed by the known and unknown dangers of life, he was a man of tireless industry who learned nothing and achieved nothing. The stories of his absurd sayings import into the sober pages of history an element not of comedy but of farce. He exercised considerable influence upon England, because he kept out of power men who

* Macaulay adopts the story because it "appears in so common a book as Coxe," and that of course has given it universal currency.

would have acted when his will was paralysed and blundered where he, by the saving grace of incapacity, did nothing. All forms of government are oligarchical, but an oligarchy founded on birth and wealth is always liable to throw up a Duke of Newcastle. His brother, Henry Pelham, was able to enjoy in the House of Commons the importance which the family influence bestowed. The brothers were very unlike in character, and the younger had a good business mind, with the punctuality, steadiness, and preparedness which the House of Commons has always liked. An eminently safe man, with caution writ large upon all his character, he was an excellent public servant and not unfitted to succeed Walpole. The other important member of Walpole's Cabinet was Lord Chancellor Hardwicke, a man of astonishing versatility, a brilliant advocate, a judge who was never reversed, a politician who stood well with all sections. Newcastle, Pelham, and Hardwicke now combined to meet the situation produced by Walpole's fall.

The new administration experienced all the inconvenience of coalition, and contained two distinct parties: Newcastle, Pelham, and Hardwicke on the one side, on the other the secret influence of Lord Bath, and the aspiring genius of Carteret. The Pelham influence possessed the preponderating power in the Commons, but Carteret quickly gained the ear of the King. George II. had a comprehensive knowledge of German politics, and was passionately attached to his Electorate of Hanover; Carteret alone amongst English statesmen equalled the King

in knowledge, and his views of policy were broad enough incidentally to include the interests of Hanover. His knowledge of modern languages was of great advantage to him, and Newcastle stood by panic-stricken while the King and Carteret conversed in German. George II. appreciated strength, character, and brains in his servants; Walpole, Carteret, and Pitt, the three great men of his reign, all won his confidence, though in the last case it was only given after years of suspicion. Carteret, indeed, appealed both to his respect for genius and his love of Hanover, and but for the influence of Lord Orford, the King might have anticipated the experiment of his grandson, and endeavoured to free the Crown from subservience to the Whig oligarchy by ruling through this favourite Minister. Orford, however, was on the side of the Pelhams, and in moments of crisis the Whigs could rely on the supreme authority of their former leader with the King.

The Opposition remained very powerful. In the Lords, that wandering star, Argyle, was at their head, having remained in office only for a month, while his chief supporter was Chesterfield. The latter was closely allied with Pitt, and was one of the first to appreciate his powers: "I share the marks of your friendship to Mr. Pitt," he wrote to Lord Marchmont, the friend of Bolingbroke; "looking upon everything that concerns him as personal to myself."* Pitt had, indeed, during his seven years in Parliament, made himself one of the powerful personalities of the House. In the days before strict

* *Marchmont Papers* (1831), ii., 220.

party organisation, votes were gained by a great speech; men spoke to their hearers, and not to the wider public outside; a debate was more than a parade of familiar arguments. It was a debating assembly and not a body of delegates which ruled the nation. Parliament was the theatre of the privileged classes, who appreciated a combat of debate as keenly as they enjoyed a race on Newmarket Heath. Matters of serious importance were decided mainly by patronage, places, pensions, and all the devices of corruption, but none the less great powers of speech won for a man the impartial admiration of all parties, and, if they did no more, at least raised the market price of his vote. Debate was a rivalry in which all sought to excel, whether stirred by the noble infirmity of ambition or by more mercenary motives. The power of that oratory which rapidly gave Pitt an outstanding position in the House is proved by his success, though we possess so slight evidence of his speeches in the reports. Philip Yorke wrote to his brother in November, 1742, "Pitt grows the most popular speaker in the House of Commons, and is at the head of his party."* Another letter of the same year, written by Mr. Oswald, contains an interesting comparison of Pitt with Murray, who was one of the few lawyers as powerful in the House as at the bar.

"Murray spoke like a pleader, and could not divest himself of a certain appearance of having been employed by others. The other (Pitt) spoke like a gentleman, like

* Harris's *Life of Hardwicke.*

a statesman, who felt what he said, and possessed the strongest desire of conveying that feeling to others for their own interest, and that of their country. Murray *gains* your attention by the perspicacity of his arguments, and the elegance of his diction, Pitt *commands* your attention and respect by the nobleness, the greatness of his sentiments, the strength and energy of his expressions, and the certainty you are in of his always rising to a greater elevation both of thought and style. For this talent he possesses beyond any speaker I ever heard, of never failing from the beginning to the end of his speech, either in thought or expression. And as in this session he has begun to speak like a man of business, as well as an orator, he will in all probability be, or rather at present is, allowed to make as great an appearance as ever man did in that House. . . . I daresay you will scarcely be able to read this scrawl, which I have drawn to an immeasurable length, from the difficulty I find in having done when Pitt is the subject, for I think him sincerely the most finished character I ever knew." *

That contemporary opinion gives us a sufficient idea of the position held by Pitt when, having won fame by his criticism of Walpole, he increased that fame by his criticism of Walpole's former rival and present successor.

The fall of Walpole marked the end of an epoch. Walpole's steady aim was to live at peace with France, Carteret's profoundest conviction was that France was the destined enemy of England. Carteret stands midway between Walpole and Pitt; he

* Thackeray's *Life of the Earl of Chatham*, i., 96, quoting *Memorials of James Oswald* (1825).

proposed to fight France but he subordinated naval and colonial war to an European contest, whereas Pitt thought first of the contest on the sea and in America and India. Carteret belonged to an older school of political thought, and it was impossible for him to regard a skirmish on the banks of some lonely American lake as equal in importance to any contest on the historical battle-fields of Europe. He immersed his mind in the complications of European diplomacy, and no man could trace more clearly the skeins of that tangled web; but the changing combinations of Continental Powers clouded his mind to the vital issue which might have been fought out in the colonies and on the sea. Fascinated by the politics of dynastic intrigue, he proved himself a powerful diplomatist in Europe, but failed to achieve any great benefit for his own country because his vision was limited to the Old World. He remains a prototype among Ministers of the spirited foreign policy and vigorous measures school, and nothing is more characteristic of him than his famous saying to Henry Fox: "I want to instil a nobler ambition into you. I want you to knock the heads of the Kings of Europe together and see whether you cannot jumble out something of advantage to this country." Such was the method of his diplomacy, while the ideal of his policy was to unite all Germany with Holland, England, and Sardinia, and if possible Russia, as the predominant Power of the north, against France. "I always traverse the views of France," he himself said,* "in place or out of place;

* Ballantyne's *Carteret*, p. 261.

for France will ruin this nation if it can." When he found himself in power in February, 1742, he at once set himself to serve this object with skill, persistency, and unrivalled knowledge of European affairs. He gave all his energies to the higher objects of politics as fully as Pitt did in later life, and like Pitt he left questions of management to his colleagues Newcastle and Pelham; but unlike Pitt he possessed in no degree the power of influencing and magnetising the nation at large. Relying only on his own genius and the support of the King, he found in the hour of need that these things availed nothing against those who controlled the House of Commons.

It is impossible to recount in detail the successes and failures of Carteret's policy in connection with the war of the Austrian Succession. The Emperor Charles VI. was succeeded in 1740 by his daughter Maria Theresa; the Pragmatic Sanction, guaranteed by all the great Powers, served only to illustrate the idleness of international oaths. Frederick the Great began his reign over Prussia by claiming a large part of Silesia from the young Queen, and France supported the claim of the Bavarian Elector to the Imperial dignity, which had so long been associated with the Hapsburgs, and was now sought by Maria Theresa's husband. Europe was soon embroiled in a great conflict, and Carteret eagerly supported the Austrian cause. He persuaded Maria Theresa in 1742 to pay Frederick's price, and by the Treaty of Breslau detached Prussia from France. This was a considerable success, but Prussia soon afterwards re-entered the war. Carteret's aim was now to act

aggressively against France, and he agreed to take an army of sixteen thousand Hanoverians into the pay of Great Britain. In the previous year George II. had entered into a treaty of neutrality for his Electorate and it was always his aim to assist the Austrian cause by means of his British treasury. The neutrality had created a feeling of discontent, but the payment of Hanoverians caused a violent agitation.

The Parliamentary leaders of this agitation were Chesterfield and Pitt, and the subject was exactly suited to Pitt's inflammatory invective. "The troops of Hanover whom we are now expected to pay," said he, "marched to the place most distant from the enemy, least in danger of an attack if any attack had been designed; nor had they any claim to be paid but that they had left their own country for a place of safety." "It is now too apparent that this great, this powerful, this formidable nation, is considered only as a Province to a despicable Electorate." In July, 1743, the First Lord of the Treasury died, and the post was given to Henry Pelham. This was an important appointment, as Carteret's wishes in the matter were overruled, and it was now believed that the Pelhams were the men of the future. The party to which Pitt belonged henceforth showed a tendency to distinguish between the First Lord and the Foreign Secretary in favour of the former. The disagreement between them within the Cabinet was well known, and Pelham was anxious to strengthen himself by taking into office a section of the Opposition. The old Whig leader, Lord Orford, had so

far overcome his contempt for Boy Patriots as to write to the new First Lord, "Pitt is thought able and formidable; try him or show him." Pitt continued his violent attacks on Carteret with the consciousness that they were pleasing to the Pelhams. He described him as "an execrable and a sole minister who had renounced the British nation, and seemed to have drunk of the potion described in poetic fiction which made men forget their country." On another occasion Carteret was "a flagitious taskmaster, a Hanoverian troop minister; they were his party, his placemen, he had conquered the Cabinet by their means." This invective served its purpose in marking out Carteret, but although the Minister's policy was reckless and he paid too much attention to Germanic schemes against France, the accusation that he was Hanoverian and not English was wholly unjust. Pitt, absorbing all the popular prejudices against the Electorate, expressed them with great effect, and probably with entire sincerity. It was hardly to be wondered at that the King should harbour resentment against this furious antagonist of his native land.

During 1744 Carteret's plans fared badly and the Pelhams improved their opportunity against him. They insisted on the necessity of a Dutch alliance, and a memorial avowedly hostile to Carteret was presented to the King.* Carteret realised that he must either secure the mastery or resign, and he made overtures to the Prince of Wales; there, however, he had been forestalled by Newcastle, who had

*Coxe's *Pelham*, i., 177–185 for text.

already secured the first refusal of assistance from the Opposition chiefs. It was debated by the latter whether or not they should join the Pelhams without stipulation. Bedford, Chesterfield, Gower, Pitt, and Lyttleton voted aye, while Cobham, Waller, Doddington, and Sir John Hynde Cotton were for making conditions.* A week or two earlier Pitt had expressed a very unflattering opinion of the Ministers he now proposed to join: in an interview with Bolingbroke he described them as weak men, incapable of concert, and in all their steps insecure; he thought any union with them quite impossible; they were contemptible, and he was angry with such and such, particularly Pelham.† Bolingbroke in reply to this tirade told Pitt that he was a young man, and must not mix passions with business, and apparently this very salutary advice made a proper impression. Carteret, finding that the Opposition leaders were firm for the Pelhams, resigned on November 24, 1744, and the administration was strengthened by the accession of the Bedford and Cobham connections, with a sprinkling of Tories such as Gower, Doddington, and Hynde Cotton. The Whig party was almost reunited, and Pelham enjoyed the good fortune denied to Walpole of ruling the House of Commons without opposition.

Although Pitt was qualified by his pre-eminence in the House for high office, the King was so deeply offended by his speeches against Hanover that he absolutely declined to admit him to any post. Pitt

* Glover, *Memorials*, p. 35.

† *Marchmont Papers*, i., 71.

himself had proposed that he should be Secretary of War, and the Pelhams had recognised his power by admitting his claims; but the King resented the dismissal of Carteret by the Whig junta, and the Pelhams dared not further offend him by pressing Pitt's name.

"The great Mr. Pitt," wrote Horace Walpole the elder, "having insisted upon being Secretary of War, and the King not agreeing to remove Sir W. Yonge, he declined taking anything; but 't is said has promised to support their measures. Whether the desire of making a still greater and more popular figure in the House will not tempt him to break his word, time must show." *

Time showed that Pelham had secured a trustworthy ally; Pitt's friends, Lyttleton and Grenville, were given minor places in the new Broad Bottom Ministry, and Pitt after ten years in Parliament found himself for the first time a supporter of the Government. He had won fame outside the House by his eloquence and by his fearless invective against Hanover. Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, died in October of this year and bequeathed to Pitt the sum of ten thousand pounds, "upon account of his merit, in the noble defence he has made for the support of the laws of England, and to prevent the ruin of his country." Pitt may well have prided himself on this recognition of his merit by one who had known great men, who was profoundly scornful of all fools, cowards, and incompetents, and was not easily moved to praise or generosity. The legacy itself was of

* Coxe's *Horace, Lord Walpole*, ii., 106.

great value to one whose means were as limited as Pitt's, and whose ideas of expenditure were as grandiose. Naturally enough the wits, who from the first were attracted by Pitt's flamboyant air, made merry over the coincidence in time of this reward for patriotism and cessation from active opposition, and congratulated Pitt that the Duchess had not lived three months longer. Bolingbroke, who had urged Pitt's claim upon the Duchess, noticed that Pitt displayed more independence after his increase of fortune, and hinted that he was extremely supercilious and did not show the deference that was due to one who had negotiated Utrecht, conspired with Atterbury, and instilled the philosophy of nature into Pope. "Mr. Pitt," was the verdict of the veteran diplomatist and dilettante, "is a young man of fine parts, but he is narrow, does not know much of the world, and is a little too dogmatical." *

Though Carteret was out, and Newcastle was become the guiding spirit, no change of principle could be seen in foreign policy. Newcastle quickly proved himself even more subservient to the King than Carteret had been, but the vigour and dash of his predecessor were altogether lacking in this flurried and anxious ruler. Some improvement in Europe followed the death of the Emperor Charles Albert (January, 1745), as peace was made between Maria Theresa and the new Bavarian Elector, while her husband secured the Imperial crown; England signed a convention with Frederick in August, 1745, and Austria was compelled again formally to renounce

* *Marchmont Papers*, i., 80.

Silesia in the Treaty of Dresden (December, 1745). The Dutch were persuaded to make an offensive alliance with England against France, but the campaign, which included the defeat of Fontenoy, demonstrated the worthlessness of the policy on which the Pelhams and Pitt set such great store. The Hanoverians were no longer in British pay, but by a transparent device the subsidy to Austria was increased in order that Maria Theresa might pay them. In Italy, the Bourbon cause was completely victorious; and the effect of Fontenoy was seen in the Jacobite rising, that last gallant effort of a chivalrous folly. The year proved that the Whig oligarchy was no more competent than Carteret to prosecute the war to any valuable end; the King desired a more vigorous Minister, the people desired peace. The brightest feature of the year was the capture of Louisburg by New England colonists, a success which clearly pointed the way for Pitt's later campaigns.

Pitt was prepared to prove himself as vigorous in support as he had shown himself in opposition. He resigned his appointment under the Prince of Wales, and going down to the House with a fit of the gout upon him, and with the mien and apparatus of an invalid, he declared in his uniquely impressive manner that if that were the last day of his life he would spend it in the House of Commons, for the situation of his country was even worse than that of his own health. A great actor Pitt must have been, for the calculated solemnity of the many speeches he delivered in this mood of approaching dissolution never

failed to tell, and they were spoken to an assembly which has always boasted a keen sense of the absurd. It could not be said of him, as was said of a great man a century later, that he affected affectation ; his manner had an air of theatrical falsity, but it was not donned for an occasion and doffed when the occasion was served. His solemn words and action flowed from deep and sincere feelings, they were the outward and visible signs of a personality that sought always the most impressive pose, the most striking and ebullient expression. On this occasion, he paid a lofty compliment to Pelham for his moderate and healing measures.

" I think a dawn of salvation to this country has broken forth, and am determined to follow it, so far as it will lead me. I should be the greatest dupe in the world, if those now at the helm do not intend the honour of their master and the good of the nation ; should I find myself deceived, nothing will remain but to act with an honest despair."

When the Jacobite rebellion startled the country and caused a disgraceful panic in London, Pitt steadily supported the measures he believed necessary for its suppression, but he declined to support the employment of foreign troops for suppressing the revolt.

" We had yesterday," writes Horace Walpole, December 20, 1745, " a very remarkable day in the House ; the King notified his having sent for six thousand Hessians into Scotland, Mr. Pelham for an address of thanks. Lord Cornbury (indeed an exceedingly honest man) was

for thanking for the notice, not for sending for the troops; and proposed to add a representation of the national being the only constitutional troops, and he hoped we should be exonerated of those foreigners as soon as possible. Pitt and that clan joined him; but the voice of the House, and the desires of the whole Kingdom for all the troops we can get, were so strong, that on the division we were 190 to 44."*

Apart from this incident, Pitt supported the Ministers, and was never suspected of any disloyalty to the Hanoverian Succession and the great principles it represented. When Jacobitism had shown itself and had been finally crushed, the standing reproach against Toryism was removed, and the ground was prepared for that complete national unity which enabled Pitt in later life to act as a national and not a party Minister. The cleavage of the British people into two hostile camps was at an end.

The occasion of the revolt was characteristically chosen by the Whig leaders as a favourable opportunity of teaching their sovereign a lesson, and as a result of their action Pitt entered office. The Pelhams, who, according to Horace Walpole, had been alternately bullied and flattered by Pitt, were anxious to secure his absolute support by giving him a place, and once more urged his claims upon the King. George II., so far from wishing to make further concessions to the Pelhams, desired to restore Carteret, now Earl Granville, and Bath, and in February, 1746, he opened communications with them. Was a King, he asked, to be forced to admit a person obnoxious

* *Letters*, i., 412.

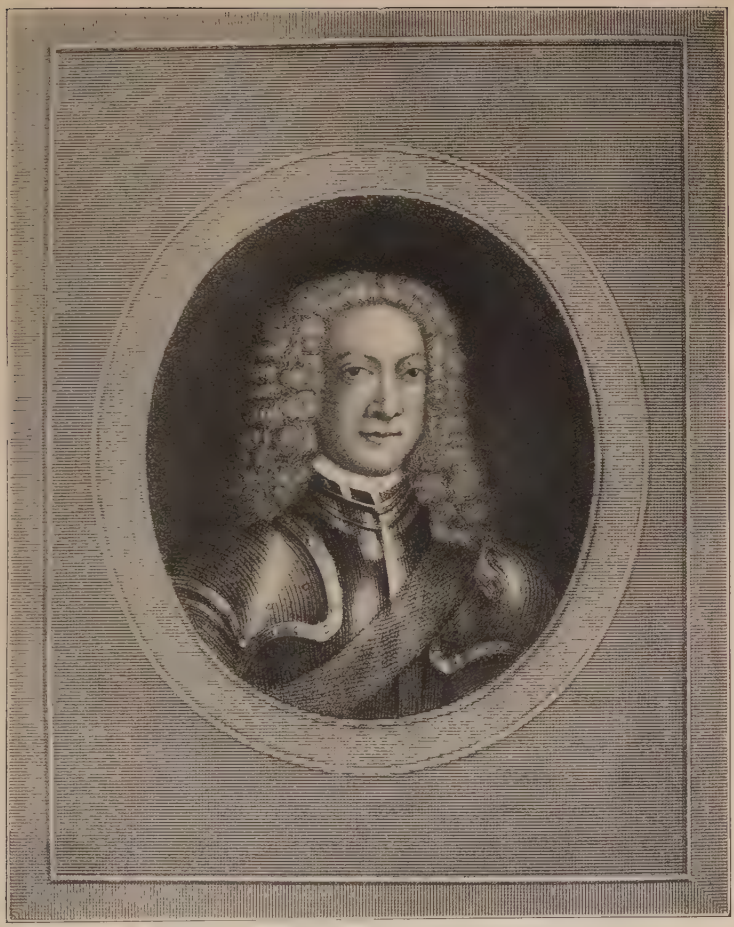
to himself? Horace Walpole the elder wrote a memorial strongly urging the sovereign to yield.

"There remains only this squadron of Lord Cobham to make the once formidable body of Patriots of no consequence. If this squadron should be admitted, and joined to the old Whig corps, his Majesty's business would probably be carried on well by this coalition, until the end of this Parliament; the Whig party would again be united, and there would be a hopeful prospect of getting a new Parliament of principles thoroughly attached to his Majesty's person and Government." *

Bath and Granville gave directly opposite advice. The former coming out of the King's closet said to Harrington: "I have advised the King to negative the appointment of Mr. Pitt, and to pursue proper measures on the Continent." "Those who dictate in private," was the reply, "should be employed in public." The Ministers resolved to show the King that he could not carry on the Government without them, and at the same time to make a striking protest against secret dealings with Bath. Harrington, Newcastle, Pelham, and all the important members of the Ministry resigned. The King at once sent for Bath and Granville, who set about making an administration that was to be supported by their collective forces of thirty-one peers and eighty commoners. "For two days," said the wits, "it was unsafe to be abroad in the streets for fear of being pressed for a Cabinet Counsellor." † The uneven struggle was

* Coxe's *Horace, Lord Walpole*, ii., 140.

† Pitt ten years later made a characteristic reference to this briefest



GEORGE II.

FROM THE PAINTING BY BENTLEY.

quickly ended; the King was forced to take back his rebellious servants and to yield to their request, which they had made a matter of principle, that Pitt should receive a post. He did not become Secretary of War, but was made Vice-Treasurer of Ireland on February 22, 1746, and shortly afterwards was given the lucrative and important place of Paymaster-General. Newcastle, writing to Chesterfield an account of this official earthquake, gives an amusing picture of George II.'s affronted dignity when Pitt was thus pressed upon him. "The King insisted that he would not make Pitt Secretary of War; afterwards that he would use him ill if he had it, and at last that he would give him the office, but would not admit him into his presence to do the business of it. . . . Mr. Pitt very decently and honourably authorised us to renounce all his pretensions to the office." * "Pitt," wrote Marchmont, "in many pretty words said he would not go into the closet against the King's will." † Pitt's entry into office was memorable not only in his career, but as a reassertion of the controlling power held by the House of Commons, or by those who themselves were masters in that House; he himself, by his own personal power, without the aid of social influence, had compelled the Pelhams to accept him, and they in their turn, as a result of the power which their political connections embodied, were able to frustrate the far

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of all administrations: "I saw that Ministry: in the morning it flourished; it was green at noon; by night it was cut down and forgotten."

* Coxe's *Pelham*, i., 292. † *Marchmont Papers*, i., 171.

superior abilities of Carteret, and to impose their will upon the King. Pitt, who was to prove himself the first national and democratic statesman of the eighteenth century, became Vice-Treasurer of Ireland as the result of a striking demonstration of oligarchical power.

The caricaturists and pamphleteers were beginning to find Pitt great enough for their attacks; the Opposition hero in office was represented as a kind of perverted patriot.

"Pitt seems at present," wrote Philip Yorke in April, 1746, "the object of satyrical squibs. There is a print and a ballad out against him already. The first is the Duchess of Marlborough's ghost appearing to reproach him for his inconsistent conduct. The second is entitled 'The unembarrassed countenance,' alluding to an expression of his in the House."*

Pitt gave, by his conduct on becoming Paymaster, a very remarkable answer to his detractors. It had been customary for all who held his office to make large additions to the salary by two expedients, which were recognised as customary perquisites, though they were illegal. £100,000 of public money was held in advance and the interest retained by the Paymaster as his own, while on every subsidy granted by England, the Paymaster retained one half per cent. as commission. Pitt paid the £100,000 into the Bank of England that it might be immediately at the public call, and declined to take any commission on subsidies. The King of Sardinia was perplexed by

* Harris's *Hardwicke*, ii., 235.

this conduct, and offered Pitt as a present the commission he might have retained on the Sardinian subsidy. The gift was respectfully declined. This conduct, so characteristic of the man both in its honesty and its ostentation, made a great impression on the nation and startled Pitt's fellow-politicians. Corruption in English politics was the curse of the aristocratic system, but it was not crushed by legislation or by reform of the constituencies, or by any external influence. It passed away under the rule of Pitt's son, partly, no doubt, because the tension of the Napoleonic wars made public life more serious and strenuous, but chiefly because public opinion had been educated by a few men of loftier mind. Among politicians, the two Pitts exercised the widest and purest influence in this matter. The refusal of illicit gain was no doubt ostentatious, but the man who first proclaims a stricter rule of conduct is always open to the sneer that he is trying to appear more virtuous than his fellows. Pitt, it must be remembered, was a poor man, at the threshold of a career in which wealth meant power, and his disinterestedness involved genuine sacrifice. The people, who were fully aware of the corruption that reigned in political circles, saw that Pitt was really to be distinguished from the crowd of members who accepted the Walpole tradition, and George II. was impressed by this evidence of honesty.

The King was persuaded to take a more favourable view of Pitt by the zeal he showed in advocating a reward for Cumberland's victory over the Jacobites at Culloden. The new Paymaster was

anxious to stand well with the old Whig party. He succeeded in impressing Pelham, who told Newcastle that Pitt had the dignity of Wyndham, the wit of Pulteney, and the knowledge and judgment of Walpole. Pitt, wrote Newcastle, "said all that was right for the King, kind and respectful to the old corps, and resolute and contemptuous of the Tory Opposition." * Again, when the pension for Cumberland was first mentioned, Newcastle wrote: "Mr. Pitt has distinguished himself by his forwardness upon this occasion, and has been of great use to us. The King insists upon his moving (the vote of thanks); but the Premier thinks that honour should be conferred upon him." † George Grenville, writing a rather splenetic Memoir in 1762, says that Pitt

"took the strongest part with the Administration, and endeavoured by all possible means to gain the confidence of the remains of Sir Robert Walpole's party, for which purpose he publicly disclaimed his former conduct. This gave the last blow to all intercourse between Lord Cobham and him. Having detached Mr. James Grenville from Lord Cobham, he appointed him his Deputy-Paymaster, which greatly irritated Lord Cobham. The rupture between Lord Cobham and Mr. Pitt likewise produced great uneasiness and coldness from Lord Cobham to Lord Temple and myself; for though I was determined to preserve every mark of duty and attachment to my uncle, I still supported Lord Temple and Mr. Pitt on every occasion which his political conduct gave rise to." ‡

* Coxe's *Pelham*, i., 309. † *Ibid.*, 485.
‡ *Grenville Papers*, i., 424.

Thus, the Cobham cousinhood had become the Grenville connection, and it is clear that even George Grenville accepted Pitt as leader. By this time, Pitt had shed the patronage not only of Lord Cobham but also that of Frederick, Prince of Wales, who when Pitt was proposed for Secretary of War diverted himself by sending a letter to Harrington suggesting Miss Chudleigh as more suitable for the post than Pitt.*

The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle ended the war in 1748; it marked the rise of Prussia as a great power, but the restitution of Cape Breton to France in exchange for Madras left the question of supremacy in America and India still undecided. The balance of power remained undisturbed; France had won great glory but no extension of territory; Austria had been impoverished by the loss of Silesia, but another great German Power had arisen which divided the German race, yet was strong enough to prove a sufficient ally for England against France; the policy of the Dutch alliance had been shown to be obsolete and ineffective, but England's sea-power was undisputed and the comparative failure of the Continental campaigns proclaimed that she must trust to her sea-power more fully. The Spanish Right of Search, which had provoked the original quarrel in 1739, was not even mentioned at the peace, and the war which had begun as a colony quarrel had ended with no fresh advantages for the Empire of Great Britain. The peace was welcomed by Pitt as "absolutely necessary for our very being," and the conduct of the

* Horace Walpole's *Letters*, i., 407.

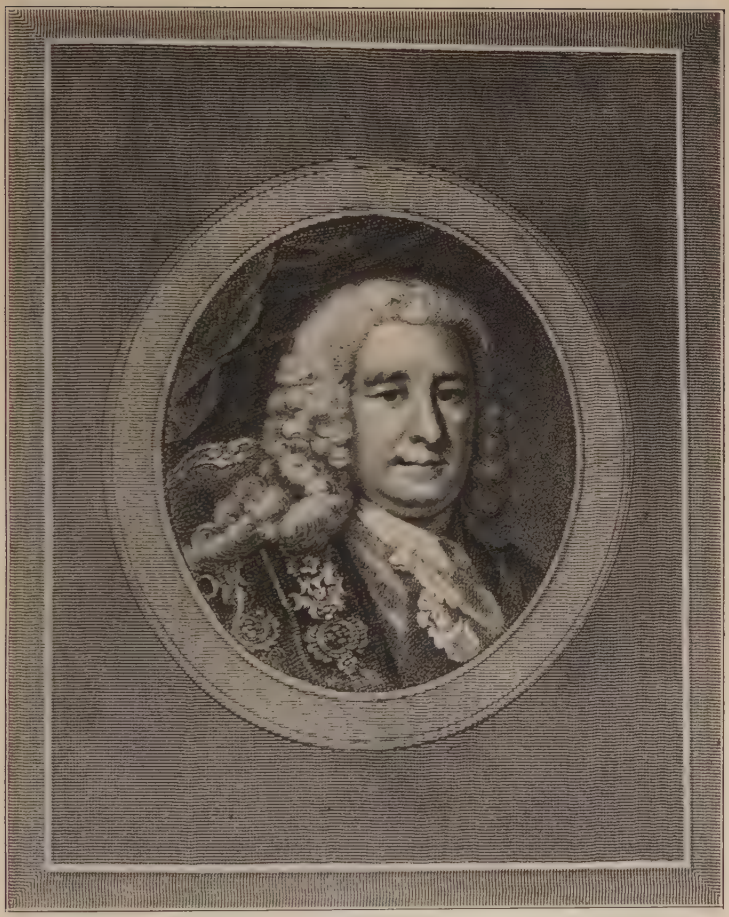
war may well have taught him that English interests were best served not by an active part in the dynastic combinations of Europe, but by concentrated efforts in America and India, where a wider colonial and commercial empire might be won.

The Duke of Newcastle was much occupied during the following years in subsidising various electors of the Empire in order to secure the election of the Archduke Joseph as King of the Romans. Pelham objected to the expense involved in this extensive purchase of votes, and the elder Horace Walpole also opposed the system. Pitt, who at this time attached himself closely to Newcastle, defended the policy, but was evidently impressed by Walpole's arguments.* Newcastle was even more anxious to turn out the Duke of Bedford than to elect the Archduke Joseph, and this scheme closely interested Pitt, as his most prominent rival in the House was Henry Fox, an ally if not a member of the Bedford connection. During the later years of Pelham's leadership, this rivalry became more marked, but it is remarkable that when Fox, on Chesterfield's resignation, was talked of for Secretary, he wrote that the House of Commons was in his favour "and none more loudly than Pitt and Lyttleton." † Newcastle and Pelham differed as to the advisability of turning out Bedford, and this led to Pitt's affirming his allegiance to the Duke, ‡ and at the same time reconciling to the best of his ability the different views of

* See his letter, Coxe's *Horace, Lord Walpole*, ii., 346.

† Coxe's *Pelham*, i., 391.

‡ *Ibid.*, ii., 313, 314, and *Chatham Correspondence*, i., 31–56.



HENRY PELHAM.

FROM THE PAINTING BY BENTLEY.

the two brothers. Bedford and Sandwich retired in 1751, and Fox, though he remained in office, was still their friend and associate. His vehement opposition to Hardwicke's Marriage Bill lost him the friendship of the Lord Chancellor, who from that time preferred the claims of Pitt. Fox identified himself with no general scheme of policy, but he was singularly gifted with the qualities that give influence in the House of Commons—a robust commonsense, a rough wit, and the temperament of a fighting party leader. He frankly accepted the view that the object of politics is office, and his opposition to the Marriage Bill was the only occasion when he showed any real depth of conviction. He had always been a member of the Whig party, and was looked upon by the general body of Whigs as one who had done good service—not to the State but to the party—and was therefore deserving of reward. His popularity in the House was far greater than that of Pitt, who never practised the arts which produce personal liking and affection. Pitt looked to the nation for support and sought great policies to serve; Fox devoted himself to politicians, and thought of a policy as a lawyer thinks of his cause.

The years 1748 to 1754 were marked by the careful economy of Pelham, but by few legislative measures that remain of interest. In one case Pitt broke away from his allegiance, when Pelham proposed to reduce the number of seamen from ten thousand to eight thousand. "The fleet," said Pitt, "is our standing army," and with many compliments to Pelham on other matters he and his party voted against

the reduction. A Bill for naturalising Jews caused a great outburst of religious prejudice, to which Pelham yielded and Pitt with him, but on the Plantation Act, which naturalised Jews after a residence of seven years in any of the American colonies, Pelham remained firm and Pitt spoke for the Bill. Such report of his speech as remains shows that he held a characteristically English compromise on matters of ecclesiastical policy.

"Here the stand must be made or *venit summa dies*, we should have a Church spirit revived. The late clamour was only a little election art, which was courteously given way to. The former Bill was not a tolerance of but a preference given to Jews over other sects. My maxim is not to do more for the Church than it now enjoys. Now you would except the Jews in the opposite extreme; it is the Jew to-day; it would be the Presbyterian to-morrow: we should be sure to have a septennial Church clamour. We are not now to be influenced by old laws enacted before the Reformation: our ancestors would have said, 'A Lollard has no right to inherit lands.'" *

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.* (1847), i., 366.

CHAPTER III.

PITT ATTAINS POWER.

1754–1757.

HENRY PELHAM died on March 6, 1754, and the Duke of Newcastle was left to fight the family battles by himself. There had been many feuds within the Cabinet, but the brothers rarely failed to compose their differences when any considerable enemy threatened their hegemony over the Whig connections; they many times ceased to hold any intercourse with each other, but always employed some amiable intermediary, through whom communication might be made, and by whom reconciliation might be effected when the hour of danger arrived. Government by Cabinet has frequently required the exercise of moderating and healing qualities, by such colleagues of the great as are naturally fitted to perform the functions of a buffer-state between rival and encroaching Powers. The Pelhams had found Hardwicke invaluable for such a purpose, and the Chancellor still survived to be the confidant of Newcastle's fears and jealousies, the adviser of his policy and intrigues, the arbiter of his

disputes. In 1750, Pitt himself seems to have been useful in patching up one breach between the brothers, but it is difficult to conceive of any man less fitted to act as moderator over the fussy, fretful, minute distractions of Newcastle, for Pitt all through his life was singularly distinguished from his contemporaries by his contempt for the personal and family contests which to most politicians seemed of so immediate and pressing an importance. While he was indeed full of ambition, and of a contemptuous pride which made him the most difficult of colleagues and the most confident of leaders, neither his ambition nor his pride was that of the politician, anxious about patronage or precedence, filled with the lust of office for office sake, but was that of the statesman who desired to set in motion a great policy. In deliberating over the probability of his ever attaining a position of control, Pitt must have realised that the obstacles in his way were very great. First and greatest was the royal disfavour, which had been mitigated but never removed; against that disfavour Pitt could not rely again on an oligarchic demonstration such as that of 1746, but for some time he endeavoured to secure an advocate with the King by paying court to Newcastle, to whom on one occasion he wrote: "Nothing can touch me so sensibly as any good office in that place, where I deservedly stand in need of it so much, and where I have it so much at heart to efface the past by every action of my life."* How far the Pelhams kept their promise of pleading with the King for Pitt we

* *Chatham Correspondence*, i., 49.

cannot tell, but his great anxiety to advance in that direction kept Pitt faithful to the brothers, who now shared the royal confidence, against the rival Bedford party. Pelham wrote a well-known tribute to Pitt, whom he described as "the most able and useful man we have amongst us; truly honourable and strictly honest. He is as firm a friend to us as we can wish for; and a more useful one there does not exist."* Notwithstanding the friendship of Pelham and of the elder Horace Walpole, Pitt never seems to have secured the favour of the old Whig party; the Grenville cousinhood was regarded by the hereditary office-holders as a rather aggressive and presumptuous faction, and Pitt's brilliant talents were distrusted as much as they were admired. Like many men who have been eminent in the House of Commons, he was more feared than loved by the body of ordinary members.

It was probably despair of the King's favour, and annoyance at this Whig suspicion, which led Pitt to revive his former connection with the Leicester House party. The Prince of Wales died in 1751, and the Princess Dowager acted for two years with so much discreet wisdom that she obtained the King's pardon for all the opposition to his will of which in former days the Prince and herself had been guilty. For some years before his death, as we have seen, the Prince had regarded Pitt with the greatest enmity; but circumstances favoured a renewal of the earlier relations between the Grenvilles and Leicester House. The Duke of Cumberland, a man of strong

*Coxe's *Pelham*, ii., 370.

character and great ability, was a more important personage after 1751 than when his elder brother lived; and he seems always to have been regarded with great jealousy by the Princess, a jealousy stimulated by the debates over their relative powers in the event of a regency. The Duke's favourite politician was Fox, his favourite party the Bedfords; and it was natural enough that the Princess should turn to Pitt and the Grenvilles, her former servants, and the sworn foes of those who were now allied with the Duke. The Leicester House influence in 1754 was not extensive, and it was not exerted so actively as in the following year, when the proposed Brunswick marriage for Prince George seriously alarmed his mother, and urged her into regular opposition.

The long reign of Walpole had made the House of Commons the predominant power in the Constitution, and the events of 1754–1757 proved to Newcastle and the King that they could only govern through that assembly. There was no difficulty in deciding who should be first Minister, as Newcastle settled that by taking the Treasury, but that great engrosser of office was puzzled to find a man who should consent at the same time to rule the House of Commons and obey the Duke of Newcastle. By common consent three men possessed strong claims for the leadership,—Pitt, Fox, and Murray,—but there were difficulties in the case of each. Murray was under some suspicion of Jacobitism, Fox was disliked by the Scotch and hated by Hardwicke, Pitt had no great party at his back and was opposed by the King. Newcastle felt that he was for the time

secure of Murray; he sent friendly assurances to Pitt, who was ill with gout at Bath; and he opened a negotiation in set form with Fox, who was offered and accepted the seals of Secretary of State. Fox accepted this proposal under the impression that he was to lead and manage the House of Commons, but he speedily discovered that Newcastle intended to keep patronage and corruption, the disposal of the secret-service money, in his own hands, and that the great office which had been offered to himself was to be robbed of all its independence. "But how," asked Fox in amazement, "how shall I know how to talk to members of Parliament, when some may have received gratifications, others not?" On this vital point Newcastle remained firm; he was not the man to delegate to another the control of the purse; and Fox, after some consideration, found courage to reject the great post, to which such ignominious terms had been attached. Newcastle, searching the crowds of mediocrity for a subordinate, made the great discovery of his life, Sir Thomas Robinson.

"Sir Thomas," writes Horace Walpole in his most entertaining manner, "had been bred in German courts, and was rather restored than naturalised to the genius of that country: he had German honour, loved German politics, and could explain himself as little as if he spoke only German. He might have remained in obscurity, if the Duke of Newcastle's necessity of employing men of talents inferior even to his own, and his alacrity in discovering persons so qualified had not dragged poor Sir Thomas into light and ridicule; yet, if the Duke had *intended* to please his master, he could not have

succeeded more happily than by presenting him with so congenial a servant: the King, with such a Secretary in his closet, felt himself in the very Elysium of Herrenhausen!" *

In his choice of this formal mediocrity for leader of the Commons, and in his determination to do without either Fox or Pitt, Newcastle showed greater courage than at any other period in his life; he gained time, and secured what Hardwicke described as the immediate fundamental object—the election of a new House on Pelham's plan. So apathetic, or so despairing, towards political measures and men were the people of England, on the eve of one of their greatest struggles, that throughout the country there were only forty-two seats contested in the general election of 1754, and the new Parliament provided a great majority for Sir Thomas Robinson.

During the progress of these negotiations Pitt had been an exile at Bath, the victim of a severe attack of gout. On the day following Pelham's death, he sent "to Lyttleton and the Brotherhood" a letter of instructions for the party, from which it is clear that he expected substantial promotion, though he did not expect the first place.

"My own object for the public is to support the King in quiet as long as he may have to live; and to strengthen the hands of the Princess of Wales, as much as may be, in order to maintain her power in the Government, in case of . . . the King's demise. . . . As to the

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*, i., 388.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Fox in point of party, seniority in the Corps, and I think ability for Treasury and House of Commons business, stands, upon the whole, first of any. . . . A real share in Government is necessary for our little connection." *

To Temple, Pitt wrote the following advice, which declares frankly a plan common among politicians but rarely avowed. The essence of his "whole poor plan" was

"to talk moderately, to declare attachment to the King's Government, and the future plan *under the Princess*, neither to intend nor intimate the quitting the service, to give no terrors by talking big, to make no declaration of thinking ourselves free by Mr. Pelham's death, to look out and fish in troubled waters, and perhaps help trouble them in order to fish the better: but to profess and to resolve *bonâ fide* to act like public men in a dangerous conjuncture for our country, and to support Government when they will please to settle it; to let them see we shall do this from *principles of public good*, not as *the bubbles* of a few fair words without effects (all this civilly), and to be collected by them, not expressed by us; to leave them under the impressions of their own fears and resentments, the only friends we shall ever have at Court, but to say not a syllable which can scatter terrors or imply menaces. Their fears will increase by what we *avoid saying concerning persons* (though what I think of Fox, etc., is much fixed), and by *saying very explicitly*, as I have (but civilly), that we have our eyes open to our situation at Court, and the foul play we have had offered to us in

* *Grenville Papers*, i., 106.

the Closet: to wait the working of all these things in offices, the best we can have, but in offices." *

In London, according to Horace Walpole, Lyttleton acted as factor for the Grenvilles. "Unauthorised, he answered for Pitt's acquiescence under the new plan. He obtained a great employment for himself, overlooked Lord Temple, and if he stipulated without commission for George Grenville, at least it was for a preferment, large beyond the latter's most possible presumption." † The offices given to Pitt's friends were: to Grenville the Treasurership of the Navy, to Lyttleton the Cofferership of the Household, and to Legge the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. Whether or not Lyttleton answered for his acquiescence, it is certain that Pitt was deeply mortified by being entirely passed over; he expressed his discontent to Newcastle and Hardwicke, and declared that he desired retirement.

"The weight of irremoveable royal displeasure is a load too great to move under; it must crush any man; it has sunk and broke me. I succumb; and wish for nothing but a decent and innocent retreat, wherein I may no longer, by continuing in the public stream of promotion, for ever stick fast aground, and afford to the world the ridiculous spectacle of being passed by every boat that navigates the same river. To speak without a figure, I will presume upon your Lordship's great goodness to me, to tell my utmost wish; it is that

* *Grenville Papers*, i., 112.

† Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*, i., 387.

a retreat, not void of advantage, or derogatory to the rank of the office I hold, might, as soon as practicable, be opened to me." *

Hardwicke and Newcastle both write long letters to Pitt, excusing their neglect of his promotion—they lay great stress on the King's resolution not to admit Pitt, and intimate that if they had persisted in urging his claims the only result would have been to throw the King into the arms of Fox. "I honour, esteem, and, if you will allow me to say so, most sincerely love you," wrote Newcastle. "The King himself, from his own motion declared Sir Thomas Robinson Secretary of State. Those who are honoured with your friendship, thought that the most favourable measure that could be obtained." † Pitt wrote again to the leading Minister, complaining of the "painful and too visible humiliation" to which he had been subjected.

"In my degraded situation in Parliament an active part there I am sure your Grace is too equitable to desire me to take; for otherwise than as an associate and in equal rank with those charged with Government there I never can take such a part. . . . Indeed, my Lord, the Inside of the House must be considered in other respects besides merely numbers, or the Reins of Government will soon be wrested out of any Minister's hands." ‡

* *Chatham Correspondence*, i., 105.

† *Ibid.*, i., 96.

‡ British Museum, Add. MSS. 32734, f. 322.

Lyttleton has left us his view of these negotiations in his *Observations on Mr. Pitt's Letters of 1754*,* and he accepts entirely the views of Newcastle and Hardwicke: "Lord Hardwicke, to keep down Fox, his personal enemy, most ardently desired the advancement of Pitt, as soon as the obstacles in the closet could be removed: but that was itself a work of much more difficulty than Pitt's impatience would believe. An attempt to force the King to it as early as he wished, after the death of Mr. Pelham, would have had no effect (as I have frequently heard Lord Hardwicke say), but to drive his Majesty into the arms of Fox, who, with a very considerable number of the Whigs, was ready to support him against such a compulsion, and would probably have made his party good; Mr. Pitt's popularity not being yet acquired." Lyttleton's optimist view was doubtless affected by the fact that he had himself obtained place, and though there was considerable force in the plea that to coerce the King would drive him to Fox, and though Hardwicke was undoubtedly Fox's enemy, notwithstanding their formal reconciliation, and therefore Pitt's ally, yet it is difficult to believe that Newcastle ever intended to give the leadership of the Commons to a man of Pitt's known independence. The Minister had not hesitated by a treacherous offer to affront Fox, with his powerful influence among the Whigs; so much he had risked in order to monopolise power, and he would hardly jeopardise that power by promoting a man whose connections had been already gratified, whose claims were merely

* Phillimore's *Lyttleton*, i., 487.

those of ability and character. It is a curious fact that at the general election Pitt was elected for Aldborough, one of the Pelham boroughs, and sat for that place even while he led the opposition to Newcastle's administration; he has been greatly blamed for this conduct, but the blunders of the Government were so serious that Pitt not unnaturally thought more of exposing those disastrous mistakes than of regulating his conduct according to the exact ethical code of rotten boroughs. A man of Pitt's position would not be expected to forfeit his private judgment because he accepted the Premier's nomination; the relationship of servant to patron was not possible between Pitt and Newcastle.

Pitt's gout, and the injury to his pride, kept him out of town for most of this spring and summer; his letters to Temple are couched in the vein of excessive humility which he was fond of working, and display also that love for rural exile which so often animates the unoccupied statesman. "I can hear unmoved of Parliament's assembling, and Speaker's chusing. . . . I live the vernal day on verdant hills, or sequestered valleys — I envy not the dust of Kensington Causey, or the verdure of Lincoln's Inn Fields." As for politics, he would not go over to the Trojans to be revenged: "For my own poor self, I sincerely wish his Majesty's affairs in Parliament all success in the hands to which they are committed. I esteem and love Legge. Sir Thomas Robinson is a very worthy gentleman." This summer of exile and humility was memorable in the private life of Pitt by reason of his engagement and marriage to

Lady Hester, sister of the Grenvilles. "I am the happiest man alive," wrote Pitt to his cousin, "and you will believe me when I tell you Lady Hester Grenville has consented to make me so. You know how dear her brothers are to me." *

Pitt's honeymoon was a very brief one; he was married on November 6th, and on November 14th he was in his place, on the first day of the new session. His relations with Fox had changed as a result of the treatment they had both received from Newcastle; although no formal union was settled between them, they were prepared to act together in skirmishes against Sir Thomas Robinson, and they both felt that Newcastle's project of leaving the House of Commons without any substantial ministerial leader was one which must be defeated. It involved the emancipation of the executive Government from its dependence upon the representative chamber, and, as Fox said, "taking all from the House of Commons was not the way to preserve Whig liberty." Fox probably agreed with Pitt's famous remark: "Sir Thomas Robinson lead us!—the Duke might as well send his jackboot to lead us!" All the best speakers in the House were in some employment, and the Government majority was oppressively large, but the session proved an exceedingly lively one, full of personal heats and animosities. At its commencement Pitt carried a useful measure which benefited the Chelsea Pensioners by providing that half their

* *Memorials of Admiral Gambier*, i., 74. Legge said jestingly, "I think the breed will be a good one, and can't fail to speak as soon as they are born."

annuity should be advanced to them when they were admitted; previously they had received no payment till the end of their first year, and as a result had been much preyed upon by usurers, who lent them money at exorbitant rates.

When the session was a fortnight old, Pitt startled the House by a furious outburst directed against the Premier. An election petition was being discussed, and the stories of bribery were creating immense merriment among members. Pitt was sitting in the gallery listening to the discussion, when suddenly he started up, came down to the floor of the House,

"and with all his former fire said, he had asked what occasioned such an uproar; lamented to hear a laugh on such a subject as bribery! Did we try *within* the House to diminish our own dignity, when such attacks were made upon it from without? It was almost lost! It wanted support! It had long been vanishing! Scarce possible to recover it! He hoped the Speaker would extend a saving hand to raise it: he could only restore it—yet scarce he! He called on all to assist or else we should only sit to register the arbitrary edicts of one too powerful a subject!" *

The effect of this speech was astonishing—"this thunderbolt, thrown in a sky so long serene, confounded the audience," says Horace Walpole, who was present. Fox is even more emphatic; he calls it the finest speech that ever Pitt spoke; "displeased as well as pleased, allow it to be the finest speech that was ever made; and it was observed that by his

* *Memoirs of George II.*, i., 408.

first two periods he brought the House to a silence and attention that you might have heard a pin drop."* Later on the same day on another election petition, Sir Thomas Robinson made the mistake of declaring that a certain cause was a bad one before it had been heard; Pitt immediately rose and denounced the unhappy diplomatist fiercely, Sir Thomas replying "with pomp, confusion, and warmth." Pitt replied with cool art, showing that he meant the attack for Newcastle, and, in his manner of sublime condescension, added that he thought Sir Thomas Robinson as able as any man that had of late years filled that office, or was likely to fill it. Fox then took up the charge.

"I excused Sir Thomas's irregular and blameable expression (he writes) by his twenty years' residence abroad, where he had done honour to himself and to his country, and which easily accounts for his total inexperience in the matters now before us: he did not like it." †

Horace Walpole, commenting on this scene, says that it was plain that Pitt and Fox were impatient of any superior; and as plain, by the complexion and murmurs of the House in support of Sir Thomas Robinson, that the inclinations of the members favoured neither of them. The House of Commons at all periods of its history has extended a sympathetic tolerance towards mediocrity in high places.

* Waldegrave's *Memoir*, App.

† Fox to Hartington, November 26, 1754, Waldegrave's *Memoir*, App.

In another letter* Fox gives an account of a famous attack by Pitt on Murray, an attack made by the pointed recital of an old story about seditious songs and toasts at Oxford, in which Murray was said to have been concerned.

"I sate next Murray, *who suffered for an hour.* . . . It is the universal opinion that business cannot go on as things now are, and that offers will be made to Pitt or me. On this subject, Pitt was with me two hours yesterday morning. A difficult conversation: I managed it, as I think, as well as such a conversation could be managed. . . . The result of this is, that I will be as prudent as I can be with honour."

Both Fox and Pitt were anxious to go as far as they dared against Newcastle, but Fox was more restrained than Pitt, partly because he was more hopeful of immediate concessions, and partly because he was anxious to stand well with the Whigs, who still regarded Newcastle with honour. Pitt was left almost alone in the Commons, as George Grenville for the moment and Lyttleton more permanently, were satisfied by their promotion, and the intemperate Temple was his only adviser. The historic friendship with Lyttleton came to an end over some hasty negotiations† into which Lyttleton entered between Bedford and Newcastle. Lyttleton strongly disapproved of Pitt's tactics; he writes, "It was quite impossible for me to join in an opposition, which, at the beginning of it, in the year 1754, and through the ensuing session

* Fox to Hartington, November 28, 1754, *Ibid.*

† Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*, i., 414.

of 1755, had not even the pretence of any public cause, but was purely personal against the Duke of Newcastle."* The Cofferer did not perceive that there was public cause enough in any attempt to curb the power of Newcastle over the nation's destiny; and, apart from that consideration, it was in the nature of things that two such men as Pitt and Fox could not tamely acquiesce in their own humiliation. Pitt was open enough in his haughty declaration to Newcastle. "Fewer words, my Lord, if you please, for your words have long lost all weight with me."

It has been urged by a great historian that the conduct of Pitt at this time was an outrageous violation of the most ordinary rules of political loyalty and honour, and that the conduct of a subordinate Minister who, while retaining office, makes it his main object to discredit his official superiors, cannot be justified. "Pitt adopted this course," says Mr. Lecky, "through the mere spite of a disappointed place-hunter, and his hostility was directed against the statesman to whom, more than to any other single politician, he owed the success he had hitherto achieved." This judgment appears unduly severe. Pitt's obligations to Newcastle were more apparent than real: the resignations of 1746, on which Mr. Lecky lays great stress, were undertaken in order to crush Carteret's secret influence, rather than to help Pitt, and the services rendered by Pitt since that day in the House had been ample payment to the Pelhams; the promise which both the brothers had given that they would plead for Pitt with the King,

* Phillimore's *Lyttleton*, i., 478.

had, in the opinion of a shrewd and well-informed contemporary,* never been kept, and, whether observed or not, had been of no value; while Newcastle had certainly acted in a manner wounding to the pride of Pitt by setting him on one side in favour of an unknown nonentity. If Pitt had conducted a covert intrigue against his nominal chief, he would have been open to the charge of dishonour, but was it dishonourable to challenge dismissal by open mutiny? Pitt entered upon an open trial of courage and strength with the old Minister, a trial it was necessary to go through if he was ever to emerge from the rank of subordinates and deal with Newcastle as equal with equal. The main motive of his conduct was ambition, but there was another serious consideration, and the best defence for both Pitt and Fox was that they were entitled to prove the impossibility of Newcastle's plan of governing without any leading Minister in the House of Commons. There is no doubt that if that scheme of government had been successfully carried out, the representative chamber would have lost weight, and the balance of the Constitution would have been altered. Newcastle's anxious jealousy feared any rival; he knew that the leader of the Commons must divide his authority, and he seriously conceived the plan of leaving the House without any leading Minister at all.

Newcastle was pitiably distressed by the mutinous attack in the Commons; if he had possessed the courage of any ordinary man he would have accepted Pitt's challenge and dismissed him from office,

* Horace Walpole.

but this course he dared not take, though prudence as well as self-respect counselled it. Instead, he endeavoured to win over Fox, who had favour with the King through Cumberland, by offering him a place in the Cabinet. After much hesitation, Fox accepted the offer, in January, 1755. He appears to have kept Pitt informed of the progress of the negotiations, and to have been honestly unwilling to desert Pitt's interest entirely, as he at first stipulated that he should not be expected to oppose Pitt, and declared that he would not accept the latter's place if Newcastle dismissed Pitt. But his fidelity to his temporary friend was not proof against temptation, and Fox, on finding that the King really disliked Pitt, privately forswore all connection with him, a vow which was quickly reported to Pitt, who was deeply aggrieved, though he had disliked the idea of Fox negotiating for him and preferred to talk for himself. In May, the two men met accidentally at Lord Hillsborough's, and Pitt declared with some heat that the ground was altered; that he would be second to no man; that to accept the seals from Fox would be owning an obligation and superiority which he could never acknowledge — he would owe nothing but to himself.* Newcastle had succeeded in keeping the two strong men separate from one another.

While these personal contests were proceeding, the relations between England and France were becoming more and more strained. The inevitable struggle for supremacy in India and America had

* Melcombe's *Diary*, p. 284.

been interrupted by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle; it was to be fought out, with the issues more clearly realised, in the Seven Years' War. In India, the year 1754 marked an era; by the incredible folly of the French authorities, Dupleix, who had suffered serious reverses but had made an empire, was recalled in disgrace, and from the day of his recall the French influence in India steadily waned. For England, on the other hand, the heaven-born genius of Clive was working miracles, and the English sphere of power had been greatly extended in 1753 and 1754. It was not, however, by their rivalry in India that England and France were to be forced into war, as the French King and Ministers had no conception of the great empire which they might found in the East, and were sluggishly indifferent to the national interests in that region. In North America the French dominions were thought more important, and more worthy of sacrifice and effort, but the paramount desire of Louis XV. was to avoid war. Yet, if ever or in any region war was inevitable, it was inevitable at this time in North America, since the questions at issue could only be decided by force. The French and English races were bitterly hostile, the men of each race were hardy, valiant, and determined to expand their limits, while territorial boundaries were disputed and the principles on which the respective claims were based were incompatible and admitted of no common ground for discussion.

France possessed great interests in America and the West Indies; in the eighteenth century her

settlements progressed, though not so rapidly as the British colonies, and the population of Canada rose from twenty-five thousand in 1721 to fifty-five thousand in 1754. The total population of Canada, Louisiana, and Acadie was about eighty thousand, while the English in America numbered one million one hundred and sixty thousand.

The French positions were more favourable than those of the English: the two great rivers of the continent were commanded by them, while their rivals seemed shut off from the interior. The coast-line on the Atlantic was occupied by the thirteen British colonies, which lay between the ocean and the Alleghanies. West of the Alleghanies, in the lands occupied by Indians, and watered by the great rivers, lay the disputed territory. The French claim, stated at its highest, would have confined the English rigidly to their coast settlements; the English would have reduced Canada to the present province of Quebec. Another dispute concerned the boundaries of Acadie or Nova Scotia, which had been surrendered to England by the Treaty of Utrecht. During the years preceding the Seven Years' War the colonists of the two countries were occupied in strengthening themselves for the contest which they regarded as certain. In these preparations, the French made greater advances than their rivals, for, in addition to their superiority in position, they enjoyed the advantage of centralised government. The Governor of Canada was supreme, while the thirteen British colonies were divided in interest and paralysed in action by the constant disputes between

their Assemblies and Governors. But the half-feudal government which gave to the French their military advantages was the root cause of their ultimate defeat. Canada was ruled on the principles of the Middle Ages, and her sons displayed the virtues of loyalty and devotion which spring from those principles, but she lacked the free and unhampered spirit which was the secret of the constant and increasing expansion of the English. The war in the Old World was described as a struggle between Catholicism and Protestantism, and was in reality a struggle between modern and ancient ideas; but in America, the French Canadians were far more truly fighting for their faith than the European troops of Louis or Maria Theresa. The colony had been kept unstained by the presence of any heretic, and the restrictive system involved in such a policy had been the main reason why Canada had not been more rapidly populated and developed. The Huguenots, the finest stock in France, had been prevented from emigrating there. Louis XIV. said that he had not expelled heretics from France in order that they might form a republic in America. On the other hand, the American plantations of England enjoyed a greater freedom in religion, politics, and commerce than those of any other European Power. The French built several forts on what was claimed as English territory, notably Fort Duquesne, where Pittsburg now stands. Their intention to restrict the English to the seaboard was clear.

In January, 1755, two regiments embarked at Cork for the American service, under the command of

Braddock. On May 3d, a great French expedition sailed for Quebec from Brest; eighteen ships of the line under De La Motte carried three thousand soldiers under the command of Dieskau. The new Canadian Governor, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, also sailed with the expedition. The English Government resolved to intercept this fleet, though England and France were still at peace. Boscawen's fleet sent on this mission captured two ships, the *Alcide* and the *Lys*, and when this news reached Paris the French ambassador in London was at once recalled. The bulk of the French reinforcements reached Canada, but an even worse blow was to fall on the English cause. Braddock's plan of campaign was an ambitious one, and if it could have been successfully completed would have effectually saved the colonies from fear of French invasion. He himself with his two regiments was to attack Fort Duquesne; Shirley, with two new regiments taken into royal pay, was to proceed against Fort Niagara, which commanded the communication between Lake Erie and Lake Ontario; William Johnson, with provincial forces, was to seize Crown Point, the French fortress defending Lake Champlain, and Colonel Monckton, with another provincial force, was to reduce Fort Beauséjour and complete the subjection of Acadie. This comprehensive campaign was to be undertaken while France and England were still at peace, and the only apology for such action is that the French planned operations of equal treachery. Braddock himself failed altogether in his attack on Fort Duquesne, being defeated near the fort on July 3, 1755. He

fought with heroic stubbornness; his men were shot down in hundreds by a concealed enemy; he himself had four horses shot under him before he would order a retreat, and at the moment he gave the order he received a mortal wound. His death redeemed the brutality and unintelligence which, with his scorn for the colonists and their superior knowledge of Indian war, had largely caused the disaster.

The other expeditions organised during the year met with only moderate success. Shirley strengthened the garrison at Fort Oswego, but could not even attack the French in Fort Niagara; Johnson made a gallant defence of Fort George against Dieskau, but failed to reach Crown Point; Monckton reduced Fort Beauséjour and deported the French Acadians, an act of necessary harshness. The year's campaigning had been marked by a great disaster, and had made no impression on the French position.

The day before Boscawen sailed in pursuit of the French squadron, George II. had embarked at Harwich for Hanover; the entreaties of Ministers, the critical condition of affairs, had failed to move him from his purpose. In his absence there was great distraction in the Council of Regency, who were utterly perplexed as to whether they should declare war against France or not. Some consideration had been given to the question of Continental alliances, and early in 1755 an application was made to Maria Theresa for twenty-five thousand men to aid in defending the Low Countries, in view of the probable French attack upon them. The application had been very coldly received. The Austrian Court had

never forgiven the anxiety of England to secure the friendship of Prussia, and Kaunitz informed the English Minister that Frederick was the great enemy and the great danger to his country, and delicately inquired whether England would be willing, in case of war, to act against Prussia. As Hanover was dangerously near to Frederick, this was exactly what George wished to avoid, and the negotiations fell to the ground. The English King busied himself in sowing the familiar crop of German subsidies, and a great project was in hand to secure the assistance of Russia, while efforts were being made to detach Frederick from France.

Without taking counsel with any English Minister, the King signed a subsidy treaty with the Elector of Hesse; the treaty was sent over to Newcastle, who produced it at the Council, and announced that the King had settled it. Pitt's opportunity had arrived. To the astonishment of the Premier, Legge, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, acting on Pitt's advice, declined to sign the Treasury warrant until the treaty had been approved by Parliament. The subsidies were very unpopular with all politicians, and Newcastle was greatly alarmed at the prospect of their discussion in the Commons; he felt the necessity of securing an advocate, and renewed offers were made to Pitt. Hardwicke and Newcastle both had interviews with their colleague, and he was offered a seat in the Cabinet, friendly treatment by the King, and the seals as Secretary of State at the earliest opportunity, on condition that he would defend the subsidies. Pitt, however, after some con-

sideration, declined to come in. Hardwicke gives an account to Newcastle of the interview.

"I showed him how we had jointly laboured in his cause. I thought we had gained a good deal of ground. . . . He did not wish it done (Secretary of State) without the King's own inclination to it; desired a further mark of favour and confidence which must be extended to his friends. The maritime and American war he came roundly into; subsidiary treaties would not go down; they were a connection and a chain, and would end in a general plan for the Continent."

It is curious to read Hardwicke's account of the strictly economical views of Pitt at this time.* In his interview with Newcastle, Pitt agreed to support the Hessian treaty if the King's honour was specially concerned. "Well, and the Russian subsidy?" said the Duke. "No, no," rejoined Pitt, hastily, "not a system of subsidies." He plainly told the Premier that his system of carrying on business in the House would not do. "There must be men of efficiency and authority in the House, a Secretary and a Chancellor of the Exchequer at least, who should have access to the Crown, habitual, frequent, familiar access I mean, that they may tell their own story, to do themselves and their friends justice, and not be the victims of a whisper." As Pitt declined to give way on the point of subsidies, which involved in all probability the conduct of the war on the old haphazard, inefficient system which had made the Austrian

* Harris's *Hardwicke*, iii., 31–34.

war so barren of result, the negotiation fell through. Fox agreed to become Secretary of State and leader of the House; although he had privately expressed his disapproval of the subsidies, he was not the man to place an extravagant value on principle when it was an obstacle to power. He became the colleague of Newcastle, but he immediately began to strengthen in all possible ways his own power at Court and in the Cabinet. When Chesterfield heard of his appointment, he said that Newcastle had turned out everybody else, and now had turned out himself.

The King had further embarrassed his Ministers by negotiating, when in Hanover, a marriage for the Prince of Wales with a daughter of the Duchess of Brunswick; this plan was so disliked by the Princess Dowager, who feared that she would lose all influence over her son, that she went into open opposition. Pitt was taken into the greatest favour, a favour heightened by the fact that he had definitely broken with Fox, and therefore with Cumberland. This opposition of the successor and his mother added greatly to the excitement when the House met on November 13, 1755; a formidable party, with a great orator at its head, backed by the growing discontent of the people, who thoroughly approved the war and feared that the present Cabinet would grievously mismanage it,—such a party at so great a crisis in affairs excited animation in the House, which for nearly ten years had been accustomed only to languid discussions and indifferent concerns. The debate on the Address lasted from two in the afternoon till five in the morning, was marked

by a great display of oratory on both sides, and ranged chiefly round the subsidies. Pitt rose to speak after a number of inferior orators. "How his eloquence," says Horace Walpole, "like a torrent long obstructed burst forth with more commanding impetuosity! He and Legge opened their new opposition in the very spirit of their different characters. The one humble, artful, affecting moderation, gliding to revenge; the other haughty, defiant, and conscious of injury and supreme abilities." * The members of the House for the most part had never heard Pitt in one of his great sustained efforts, and on that night the orator, rising to the full height of his great powers, mastered and possessed an audience which was critical and hostile to himself. No verbal report of his speech remains, and such report if it existed would give us no better impression of Pitt's oratory than a photograph gives of a great picture: the warmth and colour would be gone; phrases that seem to the reader high-pitched, images and parallels that appear overstrained were made vivid, trenchant, and convincing by the passion of the speaker. The orator's art, like that of the actor, is perfect only at the moment of its birth.

There are certain detached passages spoken by Pitt in this debate which are given with some fulness by Horace Walpole, one of them being, perhaps, the most famous of all Pitt's utterances,— the comparison of the new coalition between Fox and Newcastle with the junction of the Rhine and the

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*, ii., 55.

Saone. The introduction of this comparison is rarely quoted. *

"I, who am at a distance from that *sanctum sanctorum*, whither the priest goes for inspiration, I who travel through a desert, and am overwhelmed with mountains of obscurity, cannot so easily catch a gleam to direct me to the beauties of these negotiations — but there are parts of this that do not seem to come from the same quarter with the rest—I cannot unravel this mystery—yes," cried he, clapping his hand suddenly to his forehead, "I too am inspired now! It strikes me! I remember to have been carried to see the conflux of the Rhine and the Saone; the one a gentle, feeble, languid stream, and though languid of no depth; the other, a boisterous and impetuous torrent; but different as they are they meet at last; and long may they continue united, to the comfort of each other, and to the glory, honour, and security of this nation!"

So far as Pitt, in this speech, was concerned with himself and his own policy, he declared his gratitude to the King for the late condescending goodness and gracious opening, and his pity for Fox; and throughout insisted that England must pursue the maritime and American war. "Our navy procured the restoration of the barrier and Flanders in the last war, by making us masters of Cape Breton. After that war, with even that indemnification in our hands, we were forced to rejoice at a bad peace; and bad as it was, have suffered infractions of it (in America) every

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*, ii., 55–60.

year; till the Ministers would have been stoned as they went along the streets, if they had not at last shown resentment." The subsidy treaties he said would only provoke Prussia, and light up a general war; subsidies annihilated ten millions in the last war, while our navy brought in twelve millions. Murray had drawn a pathetic picture of the King in the evening of his life. Pitt too could draw such a picture. "I have figured him far from an honest Council all the summer, surrounded by affrighted Hanoverians, and with no advocate for England near him." The situation of the King's people was also pathetic and distressed: "within two years his Majesty will not be able to sleep in St. James's for the cries of a bankrupt people!"

The morning following this debate, Fox received the seals as Secretary of State, and five days afterwards Pitt, Legge, and George Grenville were dismissed. Pitt's old friend, Sir George Lyttleton, became Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was said at the time that Pitt retired with a pension of £1000 a year, but he was offered no such allowance, and probably would have accepted none if offered; Lord Temple, with characteristic generosity, prevailed on his friend and brother-in-law to accept that sum as a present from himself, until better times should arrive. Certainly the Opposition of the Grenvilles under Pitt, assisted by Legge, who had previously been an adherent of Bedford, did their best to speed the coming of better days; they could not muster more than one hundred and twenty on a division, but they displayed great capacity, and Pitt

felt, as often in his career he felt, that the great unrepresented forces of the country were at his back. Fox sneered at his "awakening" speeches, but the mission of Pitt was to rouse and stimulate a spirit in the English people that should nerve them for the opportunity before them, a spirit of pride and passionate ambition. He stood for vigorous and comprehensive measures, for confident action, for faith in England herself and in the work of Englishmen who were raising new states in the East and West; the system of the Grand Alliance was gone, but the enemy of England remained, and Pitt wished to see England, no longer impeded and impoverished by the little subsidised states of Germany, trusting in her proper force of sea-power and expanding the territories of her sons in the New World. At this moment the Prussian Alliance was not secured—it was so far unexpected that Russia was to be heavily subsidised in order that Frederick might be restrained; and the Hessian subsidy meant that a Continental war was to be risked, and British interests in America jeopardised, in order that Hanover might be protected. Newcastle was too timid ever to break boldly away from the Continental system, and but for the good fortune of the Prussian Alliance, and the new spirit infused into English measures by Pitt, the war with France would have reproduced the familiar features of the last struggle — occasional and disconnected naval victories balanced by fruitless Continental campaigns. It was against this prospective policy that Pitt vehemently appealed to the English people through the autumn of 1755. As he

told Hardwicke, he would rather pay the King five millions compensation at the end of the war if Hanover should be occupied by the French, than risk the issue, which ought to be decided upon the sea, by European entanglements. He would not permit Hanover to be annexed, but he would not allow the central British interest to be dominated by the Electorate.

The keynote of Pitt's speeches through these months is struck in one phrase: "I want to call this country out of that enervated state that twenty thousand men from France can shake it. The maxims of our Government have degenerated, not our natives. I wish to see that breed restored, which under our old principles carried our glory so high." On every topic calculated to raise the national ardour, for every measure increasing the means of national defence, Pitt's inspiriting eloquence was heard, and the call to patriotism mingled with scornful invective against Newcastle. The Premier was a fitting butt for the ridicule of ardent Opposition speakers; Charles Townshend's wit found a happy phrase when he inveighed against the Minister's petulant mechanic activity; Pitt loftily denounced his little frivolous love of power, his ambition of being the only figure among ciphers. "To times of relaxation should be left that fondness for disposal of places; wisdom should meet such rough times as these." When the Government, in their navy estimates, moved for fifty thousand men, Pitt regretted that they had not asked for more; an increase of fifteen thousand for the army, bringing the total of men to

34,263, was warmly supported, while in the same speech Pitt declaimed against the folly of having sent only two miserable battalions under Braddock to America. An alarm is the harvest of an eloquent politician, and Pitt declared that by alarming the nation he would make the danger reach the ears of his Majesty: he began this work by drawing "a striking and masterly picture of a French invasion reaching London." As the French were ostentatiously busy at this time in preparing those transports which have so often excited the imagination of the more timid among English people, and were boasting of their proposed descent upon England, Pitt's striking and masterly picture doubtless produced its proper effect.

The problem of dealing with the danger of a French invasion was met in two ways by politicians; it is a measure of the demoralisation which rotted the national spirit, that within a generation of Marlborough the Ministers of England invited, and the people welcomed, the aid of Hanoverian and Hessian mercenaries in defence of their own shores. To his eternal honour, Pitt opposed this craven device, declared that the resources of the nation were sufficient, and proposed to utilise those resources more effectively by training the national militia. This force had occasioned such dangerous disputes between Charles I. and his Parliament that men had feared to raise any question concerning it, while the standing army, unpopular though it was with the nation, had steadily superseded the more constitutional militia. The great struggle over the principle

of a standing army took place after the Peace of Ryswick (1697), and ended in victory for William, who secured a body of seven thousand men; in 1750, two years after the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the number had risen to nearly nineteen thousand. The national militia was in theory based upon compulsory service, and the Restoration Parliament had technically reconstituted it under the supreme direction of the Crown; but from that date to 1757, Parliament passed no Act for its regulation, and the question was neglected. As opposed to the standing army, which retained for a century and a half its association with the government of Cromwell, a national militia was the favourite plan of the Tory country gentlemen, and from time to time Oppositions had attempted to revive the system, but never with effect. The shameful expedient of hiring foreign troops to undertake national defence naturally raised this alternative scheme, which was ardently adopted by Pitt. His scheme was unfolded to the House in a speech which delighted that eminently practical body by its plain precision, masterly clearness, memory for detail, and the capacity it showed for business. "He had never shone in that light before," says Horace Walpole. The proposals were to make the militia a real body of fifty or sixty thousand men, consisting entirely of infantry, enlisted under the compulsory force of the civil authority, a body which should be permanently available for national defence, and for furnishing recruits who would be trained men, for the regular army. Pitt expressly stated that the militia was to be only

an auxiliary force, as he desired to see the standing army maintained at a strength of eighteen thousand men. This scheme, he argued, was "preferable to waiting to see if the wind would blow you mercenary troops" from Europe, and he specially commended it to the country gentlemen, who were, indeed, much gratified by the measure. A Bill embodying these principles was passed by the Commons but thrown out by the Lords*. In 1757, Pitt revived the plan.

The struggle for the valley of the Ohio in America forced on negotiations in Europe which revolutionised the international relations of all the great States, dividing ancient allies and reconciling inveterate foes. The grand contest between England and France might have been fought as a naval duel; nothing in the nature of the struggle demanded that it should be made a European concern. But all the eighteenth-century wars were of double aspect; in every case, the New World struggle was accompanied by hostilities between the Continental Powers; this gave to France double opportunities of aggression, but also laid upon her resources a double strain. The great House of Bourbon, rivalled on one side by the House of Hapsburg, on the other by England's growing power, had struggled with unhesitating courage and pride to bear the weight

* The Militia Bill excited very protracted discussions in the Commons, as the details were of interest to the country gentlemen. Pitt writes to his nephew: "I am well, but threatened with gout in my feet, from a parliamentary debauch, till six in the morning, on the Militia."

of too glorious a destiny. Prussia, under the most cynical and able of all modern Kings, was beginning to move towards its position of predominance in Central Europe. The House of Hapsburg was ruled by a woman who could never forget the Silesian wrong perpetrated by Prussia, and after Aix-la-Chapelle was served by Kaunitz, a diplomatist who shared to the full his sovereign's belief that Prussia must be destroyed. The immense Empire of the North was beginning to stir into life, to realise her mighty strength, and to insist that the gigantic Slavonic armies should give Russia a share in the development of Western civilisation. The continental convulsions caused by the growth of powerful nations and by the clashing of dynastic ambitions were felt by England because of her connection with Hanover, and by the same accident they combined with that colonial and naval rivalry which was of so much larger importance to the Island Kingdom, though it occupied so much less of her statesmens' thought, than the balance of power in Europe.

The American difficulty was the signal for universal preparation. The English Ministers turned, as we have seen, to Austria, Russia, Holland, and the minor German Powers. It soon became evident to Holderness, who conducted the English negotiation, that the old system would not be revived. A Conference at The Hague in May, 1755, showed that the chief party among the Dutch was bent on neutrality, while the Ministers at Vienna showed very little hostility to France. Keith, writing to Newcastle (May 22d), reported a frank expression of Kaunitz's views.

Prussia, said Kaunitz, had destroyed the old equilibrium of Europe, and it was necessary to bring in Russia as a counterbalance to the new power. The only radical remedy was the restoration of the former state of affairs; that is, the restitution of Silesia to Maria Theresa.* A demand for Austrian troops to assist in defending the Low Countries against France, and Hanover against Prussia, met with a cold reply, which declared that ten thousand Austrians would be sent if England sent twenty thousand, secured a Dutch force and concluded a subsidy treaty with Russia. The English answer to this onerously conditioned offer was delayed, and on August 16th the Austrian Council decided to observe a neutrality, and leave the Low Countries to their fate. Although they failed in obtaining pledges from England's allies in the last war, the Ministers achieved greater success with the former allies of France. At Madrid, where Wall was in power, the French Ambassador Duras made strenuous exertions to secure Spanish intervention in the American quarrel on behalf of France. He went so far as to denounce Wall for his English proclivities. The Spanish reply was not encouraging. His Catholic Majesty regretted the rupture in America, but observed that "there should not be too ostentatious a display of the fortunate harmony existing between the two branches of the Bourbon house, lest the jealousy of other nations should be aroused."† This temporary interruption

* Waddington, *Louis XV. et le Renversement des Alliances* (1896), p. 134.

† *Ibid.*, 122.

of Bourbon amity no doubt influenced the proposals made to Spain by Pitt two years later.

Negotiations with Prussia began in July through the Duke of Brunswick. An inquiry was addressed to Frederick, whether he would abstain from interfering with the defence of Hanover, if the Electorate should be attacked. Frederick replied that the time for declaring his policy was not yet, but he would be glad to further an amicable settlement between France and England. His position was delicate; his French treaty of alliance would expire in 1756, and he desired Louis to believe that Prussia would renew it. At the same time, Frederick knew well enough that Maria Theresa passionately desired to regain Silesia, and he feared that English money might subsidise a hostile combination of Austria, Russia, Saxony, and Holland. Especially he dreaded the Russian armies. In April, 1755, he strongly advised France to attack Hanover at once, believing that with Hanover occupied England would speedily come to terms; Rouillée welcomed the advice, and suggested that the invasion would be admirably executed by Prussian troops, but Frederick observed that sixty thousand Russians encamped every summer near his frontier and declined the suggestion. The Anglo-Russian treaty was the key of the position, and after it was signed Frederick quickly decided what his action should be. Hanbury Williams had gone to St. Petersburg to arrange a convention that should intimidate Prussia, and the treaty accomplished its object. Russia, in return for a large subsidy, promised to maintain fifty-five thousand men on the

Livonian frontier; if Great Britain or her allies should be attacked, the Russian army should be raised to one hundred thousand, while England engaged to send a fleet to the Baltic, and secure a passage through Poland for the Russian troops. A secret article provided that each Power should communicate to the other any negotiation with the common enemy.* The common enemy, according to the Czarina Elizabeth, was the King of Prussia. When Frederick saw this treaty he suggested that the neutrality of Germany should be guaranteed by Great Britain and Prussia, and on January 16, 1756, the Treaty of Westminster was signed. Each nation was pledged not to attack the other, and to persuade its allies to refrain from such attack; both agreed to unite forces against any state invading Germany, from which the Austrian Low Countries were expressly excluded; all treaties of guaranty between the two nations were renewed. When the treaty came before Parliament, Pitt said that he would not have signed it for all the five great places of those whose signatures were attached. He did not foresee that America would be conquered in Germany, and his opposition to this treaty was one of the greatest errors in his political career.

The effect of the treaty in Europe was not so advantageous to Frederick as he expected. The Anglo-Russian treaty was ratified on February 14, 1756, and while England declared that Russian troops would only be requisitioned in the event of an attack on Hanover, Russia made the very different

* Waddington, *op. cit.*, 152.

declaration that the troops would march, should Prussia, the "common enemy" of the secret article, attack England or an ally of England. Among the allies of England it was to be understood that Austria was included, so that Frederick was still exposed to Russian hostility if he attacked Maria Theresa. Prussia was further endangered by the complete breach with France that followed the Treaty of Westminster. Kaunitz heard of that treaty with satisfaction: he believed the antagonism between the Hapsburgs and Bourbons was a foolish survival, and that an alliance between the two great Catholic Powers might control Europe and avenge Austria. His plans were greatly helped by the Czarina's declaration (April, 1756) that she would place eighty thousand men in the field against Prussia, and would not make peace till Silesia was restored to Maria Theresa. Louis declined to engage in the scheme for partitioning Prussia proposed by Kaunitz. But the first step was taken and a defensive alliance was arranged by the first Treaty of Versailles (May, 1756), by which Austria agreed to give no aid to England, and France was pledged not to invade the Low Countries. The system of Europe was thus completely changed.

The French King waited for months after the hostile acts committed by the English before he retaliated, either by practical measures or by a declaration of war. By ostentatious preparations in his ports from Dunkirk to Brest, he had, as we have seen, caused considerable panic among his enemies, and these preparations were a skilful disguise for the

bold and novel scheme conceived by his Ministers. It was decided to attack Minorca, and an expedition consisting of twelve thousand men, under the Duc de Richelieu, and twelve ships of the line (with no fewer than two hundred transports) under La Galissonière, one of the most capable of French naval commanders, left Toulon on April 10, 1756. One of the gravest charges which history has brought against Newcastle's government is that it culpably neglected all plans for defeating this scheme. The fleet under Admiral Byng, intended to intercept the French expedition, did not sail from Spithead until April 7th. Byng, failing to defeat the French admiral, could not raise the siege and Minorca capitulated in June.

These events had created great excitement in France and England; the former country declared war formally on May 11th, the latter a week later, and this first incident in the war caused immense rejoicings in Paris, and equal shame and indignation in London. There was a great outcry against Ministers, and Newcastle was in a perturbed fever of fear. To the deputation from the city which waited on him to demand punishment for Byng, he replied, "Oh, indeed, he shall be tried immediately; he shall be hanged directly." That their own conduct might be screened, Ministers adopted and stimulated the wild popular anger against the admiral; Hawke was sent to Gibraltar to arrest Byng and West, and they were immediately brought to England as prisoners. The opinion of more disinterested persons was reflected in a letter of George Grenville to Pitt.

"What can be the excuse for sending a force, which at the utmost is scarcely equal to the enemy, upon so important and decisive an expedition? Though in the venality of this hour, it may be deemed sufficient to throw the whole blame upon Byng, yet I will venture to say the other is a question that, in the judgment of every impartial man, now and hereafter, will require a better answer than, I am afraid, can be given to it." *

Naval tacticians have been divided in their opinions on the wisdom of Byng's actions, but the chief blame for the loss of Minorca must lie upon the Ministers who delayed so long the preparations for defence, and then dispatched a fleet inadequate in strength, ill-manned, and in bad condition. In the year 1756, France possessed sixty-three ships of the line, England one hundred and forty-five, and there was no reason why Byng should not have been furnished with a much stronger fleet. The theoretical command of the sea had not secured immunity from attack; notwithstanding the immensely greater strength of the English naval resources, the French expedition to Canada, with the exception of two ships, had eluded Boscawen, and La Galissonière had decisively prevented the relief of Minorca.

Before the definite news that Minorca was lost reached London, Parliament had risen; but there had arrived rumours of disaster when Pitt spoke in the great debate of May 11, 1756.

"He charged Ministers with having provoked before they could defend and neglected after provocation; with

**Chatham Correspondence*, i., 163.

having left the country inferior to France in every quarter. He prayed to God that his Majesty might not have Minorca, like Calais, written upon his heart! If he saw a child (Newcastle) driving a go-cart close to the edge of a precipice, with the precious freight of an old king and his family, he was bound to take the reins out of such hands."

The picturesque image of the go-cart captured the public fancy. It aptly called up the trivial absurdities of the chief Minister, whose nerveless hands were so unfit to hold the reins of government at this crisis. A great wave of angry popular feeling was rising throughout the land. From all the chief counties and towns addresses were sent, demanding strict inquiry into the Minorca disaster, and the city of London suggested that supplies should be stopped until grievances had been redressed. The year was marked by other losses which added fuel to the fire when they become known; in June, Calcutta was captured by Surajah Dowlah, while in America, Montcalm captured the important fortress of Oswego for the French (August). In Europe it became clear that the treaty with Prussia would entail heavy responsibilities; Frederick asserted, prematurely in fact, that the defensive alliance between Austria and France had grown into the famous coalition of *les trois cotillons* (Elizabeth of Russia, Maria Theresa, and the Pompadour), who, together with Saxony, had conceived an elaborate scheme for the division of his entire possessions. Before the year was out, the Prussian King had occupied Saxony and defeated the Austrians at Lobositz (October 1st). It is not

surprising that contemporary and later historians should describe this year as one of the most humiliating in English history; England's only ally was launched upon a struggle so unequal that it seemed inconceivable that his little kingdom should survive, a naval rebuff had shaken confidence in the chief arm of defence, important losses in East and West had caused a great diminution of empire, while the island itself was protected by hired mercenaries from Hanover and Hesse.

In the political world at home, events occurred which, in combination with these greater difficulties, so greatly impressed Parliament that Newcastle was compelled to resign, though his majority still remained secure. Popular agitation always produced its effect on the Parliaments of the eighteenth century. Both Pitt and his great son were strengthened by this obscurely working but manifestly potent force. Other causes, within the ringed fence of the privileged classes, were working for Pitt at this time. The heir to the throne came of age, and after some blundering negotiations by Newcastle and Hardwicke, a new opposition Court was firmly established. The influence of the Princess Dowager and Lord Bute remained secure, and was thrown upon the side of Pitt. To add to Newcastle's embarrassment, the Chief Justice died, and Murray insisted on being appointed to his place. The Premier bid higher and higher with offers of place and pensions to persuade Murray to stay in the House of Commons; all the offers were declined and the Ministry was bereft of its ablest apologist. Finally, Fox, who

had never trusted Newcastle and who hoped to secure greater power by other arrangements, resigned his office, and the timid and blundering Minister was left face to face with an angry people.

Having once more quarrelled with Fox, Newcastle hoped that he might again turn to Fox's rival. Fox had presented a memorial to the King,* stating the ground of his resignation, and intimating that he supposed his place would be offered to Pitt, which he hoped was in negotiation. His view was that Pitt would not consent to join Newcastle, and that the Premier being thus isolated, a new coalition might be formed between Pitt and himself. In a letter to Hardwicke,† Newcastle gives an account of his interview with the King.

"I found the King in good humour. . . . 'I (the King) knew a person of consequence, sense and good intentions (which person I know to be my Lord Hyde, and honest Munchausen told it the King this morning), said that there were but three things—to call in Pitt—to make up with my own family—and, my Lord, I have forgot the third. Pitt (says the person) is a man, that when once he has taken a post, will go thro' with it steadily, and more ably than Fox.' 'That, Sir,' says I, 'everybody says.' I then shewed the King a proper extract of your Lordship's letter, which had such an effect that His Majesty ordered me immediately, or gave me leave, to have Mr. Pitt sounded, whether he would come and support the King's affairs, and be Secretary of State but that was not to be raised at first ; but what was more, *that if he would*,

* *Grenville Papers*, i., 174.

† Harris's *Hardwicke*, iii., 63.

he should meet with or have a good reception. These were the King's own words, and great use may be made of them—*they must make an impression.* . . . The King asked me, 'Suppose Pitt will not serve with you?' 'Then, Sir, I must go.' . . . My Lord Holderness and I went together to Lady Yarmouth, whom we found quite altered, saying good things of Pitt."

Hardwicke was deputed to see Pitt, and on October 19th the interview took place. "We fought all the weapons through (writes the Chancellor), but his final answer was *totally negative*. He was very polite, and full of professions to me, but the great obstacles are the Duke of Newcastle and measures; and without change of both, 't is impossible for him to come." * Pitt asserted that in order to reassure and reanimate the people of England, another head of administration was necessary. The party of Fox was jubilant when they heard that Pitt had decided not to accept office, while Newcastle and Hardwicke appear to have believed that Pitt and Fox were acting in concert. The Opposition leader, whose personal importance was at last being clearly demonstrated, endeavoured to pave the way to favour with the King. He paid a visit to Lady Yarmouth, the reigning mistress of the day, a woman of Hanoverian charms, whose influence was greatly courted by politicians. Pitt had not previously visited her, which, as Hardwicke said, was more remarkable than that he should visit her now. What occurred at this unique interview is unhappily not known. Pitt was

* To Royston, October 21, 1756.

excluded from all direct communication with his sovereign, and it was important to him that at this moment a veracious account of his policy should be given to the King. It is evident, from Newcastle's letter to Hardwicke, that before this visit, Lady Yarmouth had come to take a more favourable view of Pitt than she had previously entertained;* we know nothing of any influence in his favour which had before this visit been brought to bear upon her, nor is it at all clear that the King was greatly affected by any admonitions which Lady Yarmouth may have offered on Pitt's behalf.

Newcastle had said that if Pitt would not serve under him he must resign; but he found it difficult to relinquish power, and he was urged by Hardwicke and Lyttleton to continue in the face of Fox and Pitt. A despairing effort to secure a nominal chief who would work with Hardwicke and himself led Newcastle to make great offers to Granville and Egmont. Granville was old and pressed for money, and he preferred his present position to an opportunity for which in earlier days he would have paid a high price. "I will be hanged a little before I take your place rather than a little after," said he. The inevitable had to be faced, and Newcastle at last informed the King that he must resign. The King sent for Fox and told him to try if Pitt would join with him.

* But, on the day before his resignation, Fox wrote to Lord Digby: "Lady Yarmouth denied any thought of Pitt ever having been suggested to the King. I said with truth that I was very sorry for it. She then pressed me with really great force (to stay in)." *Digby MSS.*, Hist. MSS., 8 Rep., App. 1.

Fox, the next day, went to the Prince's levée, and, taking Pitt aside at the head of the stairs, said to him:

"'Are you going to Stowe? I ask because I believe you will have a message of consequence by persons of consequence.' 'You surprise me,' said Pitt; 'are you to be of the number?' Fox: 'I don't know.' Pitt: 'One likes to say things to men of sense, and of your great sense rather than others; and yet it is difficult even to you.' Fox: 'What! You mean you will not act with me as a Minister?' Pitt: 'I do.' And then, to soften the abruptness of the declaration, left Fox with saying he hoped Fox would take an active part, which his health would not permit him to do.*"

The King now sent for the Duke of Devonshire, a man of great influence, probity, and common-sense, and ordered him to form a Ministry and if possible to reconcile Pitt with Fox. The Duke had been friendly with Fox and his inclinations were entirely in favour of the old Whig party, but he realised that Fox's unpopularity was great, and that Pitt had favour with the people. Fox began to see that Pitt was a man much more to be feared than Newcastle, and he did all in his power to persuade Devonshire to form a Ministry drawn mainly from the Bedford and old Whig corps. His plan was to admit Pitt as Secretary but to cut down his supporters, to exclude Legge from office, and himself

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*, ii., 262. Fox wrote to Lord George Sackville: "Mr. Pitt is arrogant, and I think dishonest, he takes the whole upon him . . . . I will endeavour to make his administration as little detrimental as may be." Hist. MSS., 9 Rep., App. 3, p. 10.

to become Chancellor of the Exchequer. In calmer times the plan might have succeeded, but with so strong a popular demand for more efficient government, and for inquiry into the maladministration which had lost Minorca, such a reconstruction as Fox plotted would have been disastrous, and if the King had been involved in it, might have created a threatening situation. Devonshire was persuaded at the last moment to reject the whole plan; he told the King he would accept office on November 3rd, and negotiated frankly with Pitt. Newcastle gave up the seals on November 11th, and was followed by Hardwicke on November 19th. There still remained difficulties to be overcome. The King had been alarmed that a man such as Pitt, "who says he has not even read Wicquefort," should be Secretary of State, and was especially distressed that he should demand the northern province of foreign affairs, which included Hanover. Pitt yielded on this point and took the southern province, Lord Holderness remaining as Secretary for the north; Temple went to the Admiralty, Legge became Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Grenville, Treasurer of the Navy, and the great seal was put into commission. The Duke of Bedford went to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant. The changes were indeed so few that Temple and Pitt were alone in the Cabinet, the remaining members being followers of either Fox or Newcastle. Devonshire, the nominal head, acted loyally with Pitt. The new Ministers had some difficulty in finding seats. Pitt himself could not continue to sit for Aldburgh, but

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WILLIAM PITT.

FROM THE PAINTING BY W. HOARE IN THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

he was elected for Okehampton, Lyttleton's former constituency. Pitt's old friend, on going out of office with Newcastle, had been raised to the peerage.

Parliament met on December 2d, and the King's speech displayed the change of spirit in the new Ministry. The addresses from towns and counties in favour of strict inquiry into the loss of Minorca were described as "signal proofs how dearly my subjects tender my honour," it was announced that the foreign troops were under orders to return to Germany, and the scheme for a national militia was recommended to Parliament. In the debate on the address

"Mr. Pitt made an artful, able speech, and represented the state of affairs abroad and at home as bad as possible, told us he was afraid we would be beat next summer, talked of making great efforts this year, and when you had done all you could for yourselves, then you must see how far you could afford to act upon the continent, that you must go as far as the interests of this country were combined with those of the Powers on the continent, for combined they were."*

The first matter of importance arising was the fate of Admiral Byng. The court-martial found that he "did not do his utmost" to relieve St. Philip's Castle, to attack the French fleets, or to assist the English ships engaged. By the twelfth article of the Act under which he was tried, the punishment for such failure was death, with no alternative left

* Digby to Lord Digby, Hist. MSS., 8 Rep., App. 4., 222.

to the discretion of the Court, and the sentence of death was therefore passed, but the Admiral was recommended to mercy and was expressly acquitted of cowardice or disaffection. The popular feeling roused by the loss of Minorca was not assuaged by this verdict, and though a great effort was made to save Byng by some politicians, amongst whom Horace Walpole was honourably conspicuous, and by Pitt and Temple, the members of the former Ministry felt that the punishment of the Admiral might screen themselves, and great influence was brought upon the King to prevent his commuting the sentence. Pitt and Temple showed courage and honesty; they braved the King, whose good-will was essential to them, and they ignored the violent mob anger against the Admiral, though it was popular support which had brought them into office. Temple showed characteristic bluntness and lack of diplomacy, roughly insinuating to the King that his Majesty's conduct at Oudenarde resembled Byng's at Minorca. Pitt told the King that the House of Commons wished that a pardon should be granted. "You have taught me to look for the sense of my subjects in another place than in the House of Commons," was the King's answer. The efforts for humanity were ineffectual, and on March 14, 1757, Admiral Byng was shot. *Dans ce pays çi il est bon de tuer de temps en temps un Amiral pour encourager les autres*, wrote Voltaire in *Candide*. Pitt's declaration in the House was characteristic in its pride and eloquence. "May I fall when I refuse pity to such a suit as Mr. Keppel's, justifying a man who

lies in captivity and the shadow of death! I thank God I feel something more than popularity, I feel justice."*

Vigorous measures were taken for the war. Supplies for the year 1757 amounted to £8,355,320, an increase of more than a million on the previous year; fifty-five thousand men were granted for the navy and forty-five thousand for the army. Squadrons were immediately dispatched to India and the West Indies, and Pitt announced that he intended to employ the whole British fleet. The Militia Act was passed by the Lords and provided for the training of thirty-two thousand three hundred and forty men. The measure had received much popular support on being proposed, but was for a time after its enactment greatly feared and disliked, as it was believed by the people that they might be compelled to serve abroad. The most striking of Pitt's measures was the enlistment of Highland regiments. Two thousand men were raised for the American service, and placed under the command of their natural leaders, the heads of their clans. Eighty non-commissioned officers who could speak Gaelic were drafted into the new regiments from the existing Scottish force. This measure had been previously suggested by Scottish gentlemen, but Pitt deserves the credit due to the first Minister who had sufficient courage and sagacity to trust the Highlanders. By this one act he assuaged the discontent of a brave people and added to the British army troops which have never been excelled in all the military virtues. The con-

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*, i., 349.

trast between Newcastle purchasing Hessians and Pitt enlisting Highlanders well illustrates the different qualities of the two men. Newcastle had provided one battalion for America; Pitt sent eight, and largely increased the Royal Artillery and the Marines.

Pitt himself proposed that a sum of £200,000 should be granted in support of Hanover and the King of Prussia; the inconsistency of such a measure with his earlier declamations against the Electorate, was apparently great, and Fox did not lose the opportunity of criticism. It is very remarkable that the House passed the vote *nemine contradicente*, and that the nation appears to have lost none of its confidence in Pitt because of this change in policy. The inconsistency is glaring, and is not altered because the money was to go chiefly to Prussia, as Pitt had actually opposed the Westminster Convention with Frederick. His opposition to that Convention was a mistake, and he now realised that it was a mistake. He began to trust Frederick, whom he described a few months later as that King who saw all, did all, knew all, did everything, was everything! But he never approved the plan of helping Hanover by going to market for German Princes. "Don't go on subsidising little Princes here and there, and fancy that altogether they will make a King of Prussia." *

The Ministry was popular with the country, but it lacked a majority in Parliament and favour at Court. The King objected to the lengthy speeches of Pitt

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*, iii., 17.

in the closet, and the bad manners of Temple; he leaned more and more on Cumberland, who was to take command of the Hanoverian army, to whom he looked to save his Electorate, as he had saved his crown. The great bulk of the Whigs were supporters of Newcastle or Fox, and Pitt must quickly have realised that he could not hope to carry on the government for long. The Leicester House influence, the small body which followed the Grenville cousinhood, and the preference of the Tories for him which resulted partly from his strong patriotism and belief in England's power to defend herself, and partly from the Leicester House good-will, these were the only sources of strength to Pitt. Lyttleton wrote to his brother early in 1757:

"Mr. Pitt is accused of a coalition with the Tories; and certain it is that he has become the Cocoa-Tree toast, from being the object of their aversion last year. What has caused the change it is hard to say. He denies any promise of advantage to them; but the alarm has been taken so strong by the Whigs that if the Duke of Newcastle and my Lord Hardwicke would have joined with Mr. Fox to turn him out, it is certain they might have done it before this time, and may do it to-morrow." *

It was, however, not by any adverse Parliamentary event that the Ministry was overthrown, but by the advice of Cumberland, who requested the King to dismiss Pitt before he started to take command of the army in Hanover. On April 5th, Holderness informed Temple that the King no longer required

* "This new administration has the Tories and nothing but the Tories to support them." Hist. MSS., 8 Rep., App. 4, p. 223.

his services; Pitt and Legge declined to resign, and they too were dismissed a few days later. The nation showed its resentment against this action, and its confidence in the men dismissed, by strong expressions of feeling. The great towns sent the freedom of their cities to Pitt, and, in the famous phrase of Horace Walpole, "for some weeks it rained gold boxes." The tenure of office from December to April had been too brief for any great achievement, but it is evident that the nation recognised and welcomed a new and higher spirit in the administration of its affairs; something at least had been done, in Pitt's own words, to reassure and reanimate the people of England.

The interregnum which followed the dismissal of Pitt is one of the most curious incidents in English history: Devonshire remained at the Treasury, Winchelsea took the Admiralty, and Holderness conducted the work of the Secretaries of State, but in reality there was no administration for eleven weeks, while a formidable war was being waged. The inquiry into the loss of Minorca, which was managed by the Townshends, caused Newcastle and Fox to view the political situation with fear; they would not act together, and though Newcastle was urged by Hardwicke and others to take office without Pitt or Fox, he wisely declined the ordeal. Fox had the credit of advising Cumberland to secure the dismissal of Pitt, and the overthrow of the Government in the midst of a crisis had not improved his reputation for patriotism. Pitt observed, during the progress of the inquiry, a cold neutrality; events

were serving his turn. The inquiry clearly showed that the late Government had been culpably negligent, and both his rivals were involved in the inevitable blame.

The inquiry ended without direct censure. A long series of negotiations followed, and a union between Pitt and Newcastle was secured by the good offices of Chesterfield, and on June 29th the new Ministry kissed hands.

It was a combination of all the Powers with Pitt supreme. Newcastle took the Treasury. Fox became Paymaster on the understanding that he was to do nothing but receive his salary; Legge was Chancellor of the Exchequer; Temple, Privy Seal; and Anson, to the chagrin of the city, was restored to the Admiralty; Pratt, afterwards illustrious as Camden and the friend of Chatham, became Attorney-General, while Pitt was Secretary of State with Holderness, who could never rival him, as his co-secretary. The inclusion of Fox in a subordinate office abated all opposition; Newcastle, commander of the parliamentary battalions, was united to Pitt who enjoyed the confidence of the nation. "I borrowed the Duke of Newcastle's majority to carry on the business of the country," said Pitt, and an excellent bargain he made by leaving patronage to his colleague while he retained power for himself.

He was at last in the saddle. The emergency which England had to meet was of the gravest, but was to be met in the spirit of confidence. "My Lord," he had said to the Duke of Devonshire, "I believe that I can save this country and that no one

else can." The situation was perilous for England, not only because she had lost Minorca and was threatened in India and America, but because in the beginning of this war a strange timidity and hesitation affected her officers. The temper of the two nations on the eve of the struggle is reflected in the famous prophecy of Chesterfield, and in the opinion of one who knew much of France. "Whoever is in, or whoever is out, I am sure we are undone both at home and abroad," wrote Chesterfield, "we are no longer a nation. I never yet saw so dreadful a prospect." On the other hand, Sir Andrew Mitchell reported from M. de Knyphausen that the French designed an attack on Madras, and were sending more troops to America. "When I hinted that there were vast designs to be executed in the East and West Indies at the same time by the French, who were not yet masters of the sea, he answered, 'They are so flushed with the conquest of Port Mahon, and their successes in North America, that they are capable of undertaking anything.'"

CHAPTER IV.

PITT'S WAR MINISTRY.

1757–1761.

WHEN Pitt resumed office, the diplomatic preparations of Europe were complete, and it was possible to compute the strength of the two opposing sides. Frederick, in his justification of the invasion of Saxony, had inaccurately asserted that a combination existed with the object of partitioning his kingdom. At the time when the invasion was made, the alliance between France and Austria was purely defensive, and Louis had not agreed to join the extensive scheme of Maria Theresa and the Czarina Elizabeth. It was the invasion of Saxony which determined the French King to adopt an offensive alliance. The daughter of the Saxon King, Augustus III., was the wife of the Dauphin, while France had guaranteed Saxony at the great settlement of Westphalia. Frederick's insult to so close an ally of France induced Louis to accede at last to the plan of partition which Maria Theresa, Elizabeth, and the Pompadour so ardently desired. The Russian and Hungarian sovereigns

were formally allied against Prussia by the Treaty of St. Petersburg which was signed in February, 1757, by which each of the Imperial courts agreed to furnish eighty thousand men against Frederick; Elizabeth engaged herself to continue hostilities until Silesia and Glatz were recovered by Maria Theresa, while Austria was to pay an annual subsidy, and, by an understanding not incorporated in the treaty, was to try and secure Courland for Russia. By the Treaty of Stockholm Sweden joined the coalition and promised twenty thousand men. The second Treaty of Versailles between France and Austria was signed on May 1, 1757. Louis promised an annual subsidy, one hundred and five thousand men, and the pay of ten thousand German mercenaries. Maria Theresa promised eighty thousand men. France was to be rewarded by the cession of towns and ports in the Netherlands. The details of the scheme for the partition of Frederick's possessions show that the intention of the two Powers was to reduce Prussia to the rank of a second-rate German electorate. The great European league was joined by Bavaria, the Elector Palatine, and other German Princes. Denmark and the Dutch provinces, notwithstanding the pressure of England and Prussia, remained neutral.

The French King's assent to this alliance was one of the most momentous resolves in history. Not content with his quarrel with England, with the defence of his great possessions in the East and West against a Power whose naval predominance was clearly understood, Louis entered into the Continental war which was destined to drain the resources of

his country and to rob his armies of their unequalled reputation. The reward was great, but it was distant and problematical. Yet in May, 1757, it may well have seemed certain that the great European countries would be successful in crushing Great Britain and Prussia. The war had opened with unexpected glory; England had been defeated on her own element and in America, while her politicians seemed divided and irresolute. On the continent, although the Prussian army had been increased, through the forced enlistment of Saxons, to two hundred thousand men, the allies could in theory command three times that number, and during this year did actually place in the field three hundred and four thousand.* So great a superiority in numbers was set off against Frederick's brilliant generalship. The population of Prussia was only five millions, of Great Britain not more than nine millions, while that of France and her allies was one hundred millions. Kaunitz had everything to gain and nothing to lose by the French alliance, which was the triumph of his diplomacy; Louis pledged his resources, and burdened his army, but he may reasonably have believed that his kingdom was equal to the double strain of war by land and sea, and if the plans of the alliance had been completely successful the position of France in Europe would have been as great as in

* Bestujef, the Russian Chancellor, made the following calculation of the forces at the disposal of the great European Powers in 1756: Russia, 331,222 men in all, 130,000 effectives available for offensive purposes in Europe; France, 211,000; Austro-Hungary, 139,000; Saxony, 18,000; Poland, 16,000; Prussia, 145,000; and Great Britain, 10,000 for Continental war.—Rambaud, *Russes et Prusses.*

the days of Louis XIV. With Prussia destroyed, how long delayed would be any threatening union of Germany, and how powerful would be the House of Bourbon, with France, Spain, and the Netherlands under its rule. With the ambition of aggrandisement there were mixed considerations of religion. The two Catholic Powers were united against the Protestant kingdoms, and were aided by the Northern Empire which was guardian of another Orthodoxy. Though it would be an error to lay too much stress on the religious aspect of this contest, yet as a fact the Roman and Greek Churches made war against the common enemy of Protestantism, which stood for the disintegrating power of free thought. The division of Europe, apparently the accident of diplomatic chance, was in reality a division between the progressive and reactionary states. The motives which urged Louis, Maria Theresa, and Elizabeth were the ruling forces in the international system which was drawing near its end — they were motives based upon dynastic considerations and the will of princes. England and Prussia on the other hand were animated by the spirit of nationality, the one fighting for the expansion of her race, the other for her very existence as a nation. When Louis made his choice, he signed the death warrant of his own dynasty. Louis XIV., by his wars, made the ancient monarchy a glory to the French people; Louis XV., by his wars, made it a byword and a reproach.

The Government of France had sunk to the lowest level. The weak and ignoble King, incompetent to govern, irresolute in judgment, slothful in execution,

was governed by his mistress, Madame de Pompadour. It was she who had diverted him from the wise course of devoting all his power to the contest with England; her pride desired an association with Maria Theresa, and though Frederick had made many attempts to purchase her influence she was as devoted an enemy to the Prussian King as Maria Theresa herself. Her malign influence on the destiny of France acted not only by the policy she had induced Louis to adopt, but throughout the war she changed Ministers and commanders at her will, and by a perverse fortune chose her favourites, in almost every case, from the incompetent. The whims of a courtesan directed the fate of nations. On the threshold of war disastrous changes were introduced. The naval department since 1754 had been under Machault, who realised the necessity of strengthening the instrument of sea-power, and had by rapid building raised the navy to sixty ships of the line, with thirty-one frigates. By the Pompadour's influence he was dismissed in 1757, and succeeded by Moras, who had bought the succession. The favourite also expelled Argenson, a capable and experienced War Minister, the reversion of whose office had been bought by the Marquis de Paulmy, a young man of thirty-four with no knowledge of his new duties. "It was soon seen," wrote Bernis, "that the hands which held the reins of the War Office and the Marine, were too feeble; confusion and licence reigned supreme in these departments." *

* *Mémoire de Bernis*, cited by Perkins, *France under Louis XV.*, ii., 89.

The system on which the French army was administered was as bad as the system of taxation; each company was organised and paid by its captain, with the result that the soldiers were ill-paid, ill-clad, and ill-fed.* Promotion was the perquisite of rank, not the reward of service, and many boys of seventeen were colonels of regiments. The chief commands were given to the Pompadour's favourites, who was as powerful in France as Frederick was in Prussia and as Pitt in England. If there had been in France a government even as efficient and disinterested as that of Russia and Austria at this time, the result of the war must have been different; the demoralisation of their chief antagonist was the safety of England and Prussia.

It is on his conduct of the war that Pitt's fame rests. During four years his will directed the English forces, and when he resigned office his country had risen to a position which was greater than any of which Elizabeth or Cromwell had dreamed. The expansion of England had proceeded steadily from the days of the great Tudor Queen; her naval predominance had been established under Cromwell, and constantly strengthened; her armies in the struggle with France had won great glory under William and Marlborough; her wealth and com-

* The officers were the bane of the French army. De Broglie wrote of their entire ignorance of military details. Their luxury was inordinate. Richelieu when only colonel required 72 mules for his personal baggage and 35 horses for his own use. One captain took 14 horses and 5 valets! Contrast this with Frederick's well-known regulations, forbidding even a silver spoon. His own retinue was not so large as that of a French general.

merce were rapidly increasing, and were both cause and consequence of sea-power. But the prospect of her colonial empire was clouded by the rivalry of France; it was not yet decided beyond dispute whether the French or the English race should control North America and the Indies. England enjoyed the immeasurable advantage of predominant power on the sea, but she had enjoyed that advantage in previous wars against France which had ended indecisively. In the war which ended in the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, "the British naval forces, without any rivals, passed unmolested over the seas. In one year they are said to have taken from French commerce £7,000,000 sterling. Yet this sea-power, which might have seized French and Spanish colonies, made few conquests from want of unity and persistence in the direction given to it." * In the unity and persistence of his direction of naval power, Pitt has never been surpassed by any statesman, and no one until his day realised how mighty a weapon the fleet may be. His comprehensive mind took in the whole world, and other nations perceived for the first time that the British navy could simultaneously defend the British shores and attack the enemies' distant maritime possessions in all parts of the world. The main plan of naval policy under Pitt and Anson is clear. A strong fleet watched Brest and the other Atlantic ports, while another lay near Gibraltar to prevent the Toulon fleet either joining that of Brest or conveying reinforcements to America; on

* Lapeyrouse-Benfils, *Hist. de la Marine Francaise*, cit. Mahan, *Influence of Sea-Power*, p. 280.

these depended the defence of England, and both fleets were severely tested during the war. The important islands of Guadaloupe and Martinico were a great source of strength to France, and for the protection of trade against the numerous French privateers there were British squadrons at the Jamaica and Leeward Islands' stations. These stations were reinforced by Pitt during his first Ministry, as also was Admiral Watson who commanded in the East Indies. In America, the fleet used the harbours of New York and Halifax, while the French possessed only one base, Louisburg, on the Atlantic. Quebec, though regarded as impregnable from the sea, was unavailable during the winter, and when Louisburg was reduced it was impossible for the Canadians to look for further assistance from the sea. In addition to the defence of England by the blockade of Toulon and Brest, and the offensive operations against the naval strongholds of France, the fleet was used from time to time in bombardments of French coast towns which were intended to draw off French troops from the German war.

What is most of all remarkable in Pitt as a War Minister is that victory never relaxed his efforts; the achievement of one success led him to plan another; his designs grew wider, his efforts more strenuous. When he came into office his mind was fixed upon the recovery of what England had lost, but each following success led him to prosecute the war on a wider scale. He began by offering Gibraltar in order to secure Spain as an ally against France; he ended by counselling his sovereign to make war

against both Spain and France. He began with the conviction that England must restrict the contest to the sea or her efforts would be too great; he ended by waging strenuous war upon the continent, as well as against all French colonial possessions. He was the first to realise the strength and resources of his country, and the readiest to expend both blood and treasure for the great national objects he pursued. An insatiable ambition, a sublime courage, made him the inspiring genius of the British arms, but he added to these heroic qualities an untiring industry in his ministerial office, a strong will which coerced the Admiralty and War Office into dispatch and order, and drew from every servant of the nation his proper service. When experience of command had brought out Pitt's power of action, and he had grown to his full stature in the eyes of the world, his name became an inspiration to every British soldier and sailor, and as was said at the time, no man ever entered his closet who did not come out of it a braver man. It will not be possible in these pages to give more than a summary account of the campaigns of the war, but the barest outline of events will show the magnitude of the task Pitt had upon his shoulders. On the continent he could trust Prince Ferdinand, and his main duty was to find men and money for that Prince and an annual subsidy for Frederick. In the Indian war he could do nothing more than assist by reinforcements. But the direction of the fleets, of the numerous campaigns in America, of the conquests in other parts of the globe, came immediately under Pitt's cognisance and

will; the Parliamentary orator, almost entirely without experience of administration, was faced by the most absorbing and critical problems of complex administration and strategical decision.

There are many traditional stories illustrating Pitt's dictatorial but singularly effective manner of infusing energy into the Government departments. The best contemporary evidence is in the following passage from the manuscript memoirs of Sir George Colebrooke, a merchant and contractor.

"More than once I was summoned to the Treasury to give an account of the state of the provisions, and of the money, for the Army, Mr. West giving for reason that Mr. Pitt threatened the Duke (of Newcastle) that if at any time a want of either should be found, he would impeach him in the ensuing session. . . . . General Harvey waiting on Mr. Pitt to take his leave, Mr. Pitt asked him whether he had obtained everything he wanted, and the General answered, not. Mr. Pitt desired him to enumerate what he wanted and immediately rang his bell for Mr. Wood, who in the names of the different Boards signified to their officers His Majesty's commands for the despatch of what was required, and in four days General Harvey had in readiness what he had been as many months soliciting."

The course of the war during 1757 gave little hope of the future triumphs of Great Britain. The ministerial interregnum was responsible for a lack of effectiveness and combination in the use of the naval resources of the country which, if it had continued, would have made the war a repetition of the last. The blockade of French ports was not effectively

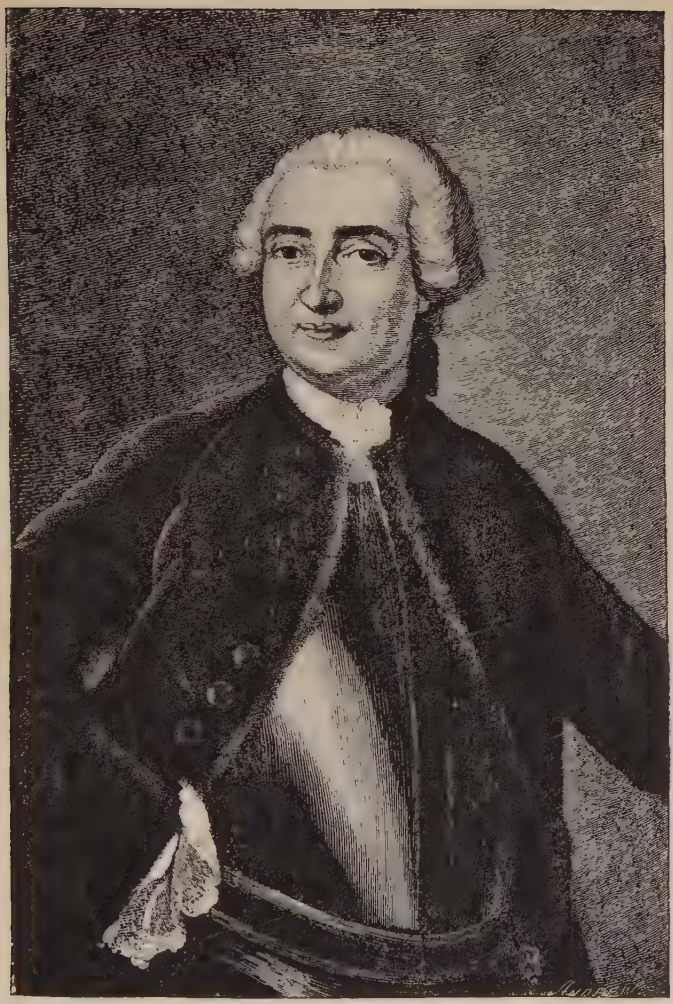
carried out, and during the first four months of the year Beausremont sailed for Louisburg, De la Motte for the same port, D'Aché, with Lally's troops, for the East Indies, and Kersaint for the West Indies by the west coast of Africa. All these squadrons arrived without mishap at their destinations, with the result that British operations were delayed. This was perhaps the most ominous incident of the year. On the other hand, Parliament had shown a ready disposition to provide the supplies necessary for a vigorous war: the total amount granted for the year was £8,350,325, which included provision for fifty-five thousand seamen, and eighty thousand land forces, and a sum of £575,056 for foreign subsidies and the pay of foreign troops. The last amount included £200,000 "for assisting his Majesty in forming and maintaining during the present year, an army of observation, for the just and necessary defence of his Majesty's electoral dominions; . . . . and towards enabling his Majesty to fulfil his engagements with the King of Prussia, for the security of the Empire against the attacks of foreign armies." The sum for the services of the year included £1,000,000 on account, to enable his Majesty to defray any extraordinary expenses of the war. The last was proposed during Lord Waldegrave's nominal Ministry, on the day on which the news of Frederick's victory of Prague arrived in London. Pitt was inclined to oppose it because the gift was offered without restriction; if it was to be confined to Great Britain and America, he would consent to give a million, but now this might be dispensed to the

troops of Hanover, though we had already given them £200,000. The King of Prussia was worth subsidising; but he dreaded the war being transferred to Flanders — he had rather face it in Germany.* This was significant of Pitt's future policy, but it was some time before he really threw himself into a German war. As a matter of fact Pitt himself had the spending of the million, and within a few weeks of his return to office £100,000 was sent to Cumberland, to feed his beaten army, and £20,000 to the Landgrave of Hesse. "This concession," he writes to Grenville, "I have judged it advisable to make upon the grounds of a fatal necessity . . . I trust you and Lord Temple will be of opinion, upon fully weighing the whole extensive consideration, that I have not done wrong." † Events shaped Pitt's policy, and although the total result of the campaigning in 1757 was discouraging, yet before the year's close the fundamental principles of his war measures clearly emerge.

In the last chapter an account was given of the three expeditions in America in 1755. During 1756 the French gained further advantages. The Marquis de Montcalm arrived in May to take command of the French forces. He was an able and energetic general, of chivalrous bravery, a leader who endeared himself to his men by his great qualities. His is the most shining and almost the only heroic figure that appears in the French ranks throughout the war. The forces at his disposal consisted of four

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*, iii., 16–18.

† *Grenville Papers* (Aug. 11, 1757), i., 206.



Montcalm - ÆT. 29.

thousand French regulars, two thousand Canadian regulars, and the native Canadian Militia. His hope of ultimate success could be based only on the relative advantage of his position; with Montreal as his centre he could defend without great difficulty both Lake Ontario and Lake Champlain. The English on the other hand "were forced to act on the circumference of a vast semi-circle, in a labyrinth of forests without roads, and choked with every kind of obstruction."* Lord Loudoun arrived in July, 1756, to take up the English command with a force which Pitt had described as a "scroll of paper"; he dispatched Webb with the 44th regiment to strengthen Fort Oswego, and resolved to attack Ticonderoga himself. But Montcalm captured and burnt Fort Oswego before Webb reached it, and before Loudoun's attack on Ticonderoga was delivered the French commander had returned to the defence of that position, and with him had a force of five thousand men, which made the English advance impossible. The loss of Oswego was a serious blow, as it was the one place of arms that threatened the communications of the French with their chain of fortresses in the West. The campaign of 1757 produced no better results than that of the previous year, but at least showed a bolder design. Loudoun was anxious to attack Louisburg, and the seven battalions Pitt had added to Newcastle's estimates for the American service were sent to Halifax, to be used in this expedition. The whole scheme however ended in ignominious failure; Loudoun took five thousand

* Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe*, i., 418.

men to Halifax, where he was joined by Admiral Holbourne in the middle of July, but there he learned that the French had twenty-one sail of the line at Louisburg and a garrison of seven thousand. The English fleet was smaller by two or three of the line, the season was so advanced that a long siege was out of the question, and the general, without attempting an attack, sailed back with his army to New York. Pitt was very angry with Loudoun, but the real cause of failure was the delay in dispatching Holbourne's fleet, and in the following year Pitt was careful that such delay should not be repeated. While Loudoun was at Halifax, Montcalm's force at Ticonderoga attacked Fort William Henry on Lake George and after a gallant defence the garrison capitulated. Thus in America during 1757 there was no success but yet another serious reverse. One other danger seriously threatened British interests; Loudoun, unfortunate in all things, was especially so in his relation with the American authorities and officers, and this question also received Pitt's attention before the real campaign began.

In another part of the Empire too remote at that time to attract close attention in England, but not so distant as to escape the vigilance of Pitt, the contest between French and English wore another aspect. At the close of 1755, Clive arrived in India to take up the Governorship of Fort St. David in the Carnatic. When the news of the tragedy of the Black Hole reached Madras he was chosen to command the land forces in the expedition sent to relieve Calcutta, while Admiral Watson commanded

MAP OF

FRENCH FORTS in AMERICA,

1750-1760

FROM "MONTCALM AND WOLFE",

BY FRANCIS PARKMAN.

E. MEISEL BOSTON

the squadron of four sail of the line. Clive quickly subdued the Nabob, Surajah Dowlah, and in March, 1757, he captured the important French settlement of Chandernagore near Calcutta. Then followed the famous conspiracy with Meer Jaffier against the Nabob, and the victory of Plassey (June 23, 1757) which made the East India Company virtually sovereign in Bengal. The brief campaign had made the England of Clive a greater power in India than the France of Dupleix had ever been.

The Continental campaign in the earlier part of 1757 pointed to the early success of the coalition against Frederick. The situation of Prussia was alarming. Two Austrian armies under Browne and Daun threatened Silesia, the Russian force under Apraxin was preparing to attack East Prussia, while before the end of March two French armies numbering together one hundred thousand crossed the Rhine and marched towards Hanover. Frederick determined to attack the Austrians himself, and left the defence of East Prussia and Pomerania to Lehwaldt, while the Duke of Cumberland arrived in April to take command of a mixed force of sixty thousand, which was to defend Hanover. The King himself advanced into Bohemia and attacked Marshal Browne at Prague, on May 6th; the Austrian army was defeated and forced to take refuge within the city of Prague. Frederick lost eighteen thousand while his enemy lost twenty-four thousand. Daun, the famous Fabian general, who was perhaps more successful against Frederick than any other commander in this war, marched to the relief of Prague.

His army had increased to sixty thousand and Frederick judged that it was necessary himself to leave the army besieging Prague, in order to defeat Daun. At Kolin, with the advantages both of numbers and of position against them, the Prussians suffered a disastrous defeat, losing fourteen thousand men and many cannon. Frederick managed the retreat with success; on June 20th the siege of Prague was raised, Bohemia was abandoned, and the Prussians retired upon Saxony.

In East Prussia Lehwaldt was outnumbered. The Russians advanced steadily and on August 30th, Apraxin won the victory of Jaegersdorf.

Meantime, the French had advanced under Marshal D'Estrées, and on July 26th Cumberland was defeated at Hastenbeck, and nearly the whole of Hanover and Brunswick was overrun by the French. It was suggested that nine thousand men in readiness at Chatham should be sent to Cumberland, but Pitt successfully opposed this. Richelieu, who displaced D'Estrées, could not but overpower Cumberland, and on September 8th, the famous convention of Kloster-Severn was arranged, by which it was agreed that the auxiliary troops from Hesse, Brunswick, and Saxe-Gotha should return to their respective countries, while the Hanoverian army retired beyond the Elbe. The effect of this agreement was to leave Hanover to the French, and to free the French army for aggression against Frederick. Cumberland had no choice but to make this agreement, and eventually it proved of great advantage to the Anglo-Prussian cause, but it was regarded by Frederick as a

ROBERT LORD CLIVE.

base surrender. The Duke was recalled, and the King received him with open contempt. When the King declared that he had given Cumberland no orders for such a treaty, Pitt replied: "But full powers, Sir, very full powers." * It was an act of great magnanimity to offer any defence for the man who had been his avowed enemy, but there can be no doubt that Cumberland was harshly treated. King George had for some time dallied with the temptation of an Hanoverian neutrality, and on August 11th had sent to his son full powers to conclude a separate peace or neutrality on behalf of the Electorate. These powers were given by the King as Elector, and were technically no concern of the British Ministers. The situation created by the convention was however a matter of direct British concern, as Frederick in plain terms remonstrated against the policy of Hanoverian neutrality as a desertion of Prussia. The Ministers formally declared that Great Britain had no part in the convention, and early in October the Cabinet, on the suggestion of Pitt, decided that, if the convention should be repudiated, the Electoral army should be taken into British pay. The King eventually repudiated it, defending his action on the technical ground that the French had infringed its terms. The incident is of importance in Pitt's career. It was argued at the time that this was an admirable opportunity for Great Britain to quit the Continental War; Pitt's action shows that

* In 1761, Pitt said in the House of Commons, "The affair of Kloster-Severn was only an Electoral consideration, and on that occasion the son of the King behaved with the most manly and filial piety." *Add. MSS.* 32932, f. 74.

he was determined to stand by the Prussian Alliance, although he was not yet ready to send an English army to Hanover. His readiness to take the Electoral army into English pay won him the confidence of the King; it was the only available means of assisting Prussia and Pitt meant to provide a more efficient General than Cumberland.*

Thus the first months of Pitt's administration were months of disaster in Europe and in America. No wonder that Pitt almost despaired. "The day is come," he wrote to Sir Benjamin Keene, "when the very inadequate benefits of the Treaty of Utrecht, the indelible reproach of the last generation, are become the necessary, but almost unattainable wish of the present, when the Empire is no more, the ports of the Netherlands betrayed, and the Dutch Barrier Treaty an empty sound, Minorca, and with it the Mediterranean, lost, and America itself precarious." † The situation was immediately met by diplomacy and by active aggression. Nothing could be better calculated to restore the spirit of England than a change from ignominious waiting upon the enemy to a policy of attack, and Pitt decided to assist Frederick's movements in Germany by a diversion against the French coast, and to prepare for the recovery of Minorca by seeking an alliance with Spain. Moved also by his constant dread of the

* The repudiation is argued in Flassan's *Diplomatie Française*, t. vi. pp. 98–109, and the British official justification is given in Entick ii. 435–439. The most informing account is in Ward's *Great Britain and Hanover* (1899), pp. 190–196, and in Waddington's *La Guerre de Sept Ans* (Paris, 1899), pp. 470 seq.

† *Chatham Correspondence*, i., 251.

union of the two Bourbon countries against England, he wrote to Sir Benjamin Keene (August 23, 1757), the ambassador at Madrid, making large offers "in order to engage Spain, if possible, to join her arms to those of his Majesty, for the obtaining a just and honourable peace, and mainly for recovering and returning to the Crown of England the most important island of Minorca." It was proposed, after the capture of Minorca, to exchange Gibraltar for that island, and further to evacuate all establishments made on the Mosquito Shore and in the Bay of Honduras since the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. Particular stress was laid on the statement that on no account would England cede Gibraltar until Minorca was recovered. The proposed alliance was definitely rejected by Spain. Pitt has been blamed for his willingness to cede Gibraltar, as that fortress is undoubtedly a more valuable possession to England than Minorca ever could have been. But there are two considerations which may have made a Spanish alliance a matter of great importance. The Spanish navy had been increased to forty-six ships of the line and twenty-two frigates, which was a formidable force; and there was a strong French party at Madrid which at any moment might obtain power and restore the traditional Bourbon system. In a war that was to be chiefly maritime and to be fought for the New World, the close friendship of the country which was still the greatest territorial power in the New World was a desirable object for either France or England. It is clear from his dispatch that Pitt feared that Spain would not remain

neutral, and his fear is confirmed by Keene's answer. "You appear sufficiently informed of the present unfavourable complexion of this Court," writes the ambassador in his reply. Notwithstanding these considerations, it is fortunate for Pitt's fame that his offer was not accepted.*

Pitt's first military scheme met with little more success than his diplomatic plan. It belonged to the most questionable part of his war policy, the attacks on the French coast. He equipped a powerful fleet of sixteen sail of the line under Hawke, and an army of ten battalions under Sir John Mordaunt, with the object of attacking Rochefort. The naval and military commanders quarrelled, and the total result of the expedition was the capture of the small island of Aix after an hour's bombardment. No attack on Rochefort was attempted, and the whole force returned to Spithead a month after its setting forth. A commission of inquiry and a war of pamphlets followed, and Pitt declared that the disappointment had broken his heart. He showed his opinion of the officers in command by promoting Wolfe, who declared that Rochefort would have been taken by five hundred men, over a number of his seniors.

Cumberland reached London from Hanover on October 12th, and was so angered by the King's reception ("Here is my son who has ruined me and disgraced himself") that he resigned his appointment as Captain-General. He was succeeded by Ligonier, and Lord George Sackville was appointed

* Pitt intended to take a port on the Barbary coast in place of Gibraltar. Newcastle to Hardwicke, Aug. 9, 1757. *Newcastle Papers.*

MAJOR-GENERAL JAMES WOLFE.

Lieutenant-General of Ordnance. The centre of interest during the last months of 1757 was in Germany, where Frederick, after the disaster of Kolin and Jaegersdorf, was to battle gloriously against incalculable odds. In addition to the Austrian army which had taken Breslau, the key of Silesia, he had to meet Soubise, who had thirty-five thousand French, and Prince Hildburghausen's detachment of fifteen thousand Germans, under his command, while Richelieu had been set free by the convention of Kloster-Severn. An Austrian detachment under Haddick threatened Berlin itself, and obtained a large ransom from the city. The King was cheered ten days later by the news that England had decided to re-create the Hanoverian army, and to request that Ferdinand of Brunswick might be granted by Frederick as General of the same. This decision was pleasing to Frederick; it promised a new army to counteract at least one of the French forces, and it showed that the lesson of bad generalship had been learnt. Ferdinand of Brunswick was an experienced and able officer, and, above all, was likely to act loyally and efficiently with Frederick himself — a man not to be guided, as Cumberland had been, by the decision of Hanoverian ministers rather than by the advice of the greatest living commander. It was on the 5th of November that Frederick defeated the Soubise-Hildburghausen army at the battle of Rossbach, a battle memorable in the history of Germany as the first in which a French army had been utterly defeated by a purely German general and force, and decisive in the Seven Years' War as

changing the French advance into a retreat, and delivering Prussia from an enemy by a single blow. After Rossbach, in fact, Frederick had no more fighting with the French, and henceforth the war was divided into two parts — the Prussian struggle with Austria and Russia, and the French struggle with England and Hanover. Four days after the battle, Ferdinand of Brunswick received his commission as commander of the Hanoverians, and on November 24th announced to the troops at Stade that they were to form part of an allied army, and to be no longer "a mere army of observation." On November 29th he attacked the nearest French fortress at Harburg, his first step in the operations which were to drive Richelieu beyond the Rhine.

Pitt received the news of Rossbach on November 9th, and at once saw its importance. Parliament was to meet on the 15th, but the session was postponed till December 1st, in order that new plans might be considered, and a new speech from the throne composed.

"It is my fixed resolution (said the King's speech) to apply my utmost efforts for the security of my kingdoms, and for the recovery and protection of the possessions and rights of my crown in America and elsewhere; as well by the strongest exertion of our naval force, as by all other methods. Another great object, which I have at heart, is the preservation of the Protestant Religion and the liberties of Europe; and in that view, to adhere to and encourage my allies . . . . The late signal success in Germany has given a happy turn to affairs, which it is incumbent on us to improve; and in this critical

His Serene Highneſs **FERDINAND**
Duke of Brunſwick and Lunenburgh.

conjuncture the eyes of all Europe are upon you. In particular I must recommend it to you, that my good brother and ally the King of Prussia, may be supported in such a manner, as his magnanimity and zeal for the cause deserve.

It was not Rossbach which led Pitt to renounce the convention of Kloster-Severn, and to recommend the appointment of Ferdinand of Brunswick to the command of the re-established army. These steps were taken before the battle was won, but the victory made manifest the possibility and the advantages of fighting France on land as well as by sea. Frederick became a popular English hero, and the House of Commons agreed with only one dissentient voice to provide pay for the Hanoverian army, on the understanding that the force was to be under British control. A fresh treaty was arranged with Prussia and was signed April 11, 1758, by which England was to pay £670,000 to Frederick, and both contracting parties promised to make peace only in concert and mutual agreement. There were altogether six treaties between England and Prussia from January 16, 1756, to December 12, 1760. The second promised a subsidy of a million, which was not paid, and a fleet in the Baltic. The fleet is not mentioned in the later treaties, but altogether a sum of £2,680,000 was paid to Frederick in subsidies. The treaty of 1758 contains no stipulation that English troops should be sent to join the army of Ferdinand, but a declaration appended provides that five thousand English should be sent to garrison Embden.

The declaration also contained an expression of regret that the King could not send a British fleet to the Baltic as Frederick desired. Pitt indeed, while anxious to assist the common cause by reviving the Hanoverian army and supplying Prussia with funds, hesitated long before agreeing to send English troops to Germany. His primary object was throughout the war in America and on the sea. His speech at the opening of the session, of which Horace Walpole gives an abstract, affords us an insight into his mind.* The failure and delay at Rochefort and in America were dwelt on with bitterness. "Nothing could be well till the army was subjected to the civil power; they were to obey, not to reason." Lord Loudoun was "loaded with all the asperity peculiar to his (Pitt's) style." He had not even attempted anything, and all the doors in America were open to France. A panegyric on Watson, Pococke, and Clive followed. "What astonishing success had Watson with only three ships! . . . He did not stay to careen this and condemn that, but at once sailed into the body of the Ganges. He was supported by Clive, that man not born for a desk—that *heaven-born General*, whose magnanimity, determination, and execution would charm a king of Prussia; and whose presence of mind astonished the Indies!" A significant outburst on the subject of continental measures caused Pitt considerable difficulty in the following months. He declared that he meant the army for our immediate selves; "he had never been against continental measures when prac-

* *Memoirs of George II.*, iii., 88, 90.

ticable, but would not now send a drop of our blood to the Elbe, to be lost in that ocean of gore." Pitt maintained his refusal to send English troops for some time, but he soon took the first step by the dispatch of a small force to garrison Embden. The victories of Prince Ferdinand induced him to go much farther in that direction than in 1757 he believed could be justified.

The supplies voted for 1758 amounted to £10,486,457. Foreign subsidies and the pay of foreign troops absorbed £1,861,897, which included the £670,000 paid to Frederick; the number of seamen was raised to sixty thousand, and of the land forces to 86,500; thirty thousand of these were for Gibraltar and the colonies, and including the force on the Irish establishment, the total of the army was about one hundred thousand men. Pitt's plans for the year were a repetition of the attack on Louisburg, and descents on the French coast. But he was determined to avoid the chief causes of the earlier failure. By means of a powerful fleet under Hawke and Boscawen he had attempted to intercept the French squadron returning from Louisburg in the previous October, but the admirals had missed their enemy. It was therefore necessary to hurry on the preparations for the fleet entrusted to Boscawen, which was to aid in the attack. Sir Charles Hardy sailed early in January for Halifax, to take command of the squadron which had wintered at that port under Colville, with orders to repair off Louisburg as soon as the season would permit, to intercept any French supplies. Boscawen himself sailed on

February 19th with a very powerful fleet of twenty-three of the line and eighteen frigates. Hawke, with seven of the line, was sent to block up the ports in the Bay of Biscay, and Osborne, with fifteen of the line, cruised between Cape de Galle and Carthagena on the coast of Spain. There were three French squadrons at Brest, Toulon, and Carthagena, all under orders to steal away, if practicable, for Louisburg. De la Clue had sailed from Toulon as early as December, 1757, but could not pass the Straits. This year the blockade was effective, as both Osborne and Hawke won valuable victories.

Pitt by dispatching powerful fleets at an early date had secured an immense advantage. He had cut off from Louisburg the reinforcements, of which the very rumour had paralysed Holbourne and Loudoun in the previous year.

In America, Pitt had appointed Major-General Abercrombie in Loudoun's place. He removed one of Loudoun's chief difficulties by an order that provincial officers should take equal rank with officers of the regular army according to grade, and made the raising of men an easier matter by his financial arrangements. His Majesty, wrote Pitt,* considered that the provinces of the north could themselves raise twenty thousand men "to join a body of the King's forces for invading Canada, by way of Crown Point, and carrying war into the heart of the enemy's possessions." The King would provide artillery, arms, ammunition, tents, transport, and food.

* Pitt to the Governor of Massachusetts, Dec. 30, 1757, Thackeray's *Life*, ii., 421.

"The whole therefore that his Majesty expects and requires from the several provinces is, the levying, clothing and pay of the men; and on these heads also, that no encouragement may be wanting to this great and salutary attempt, the King is further most graciously pleased to permit me to acquaint you, that strong recommendations will be made to Parliament in their session next year, to grant a proper compensation for such expenses as above, according as the active vigour and strenuous efforts of the respective provinces shall justly appear to merit."

On the same day Pitt wrote the Governor of New York advising boats to be built for the transport of twenty-five thousand men over Lake George to be ready by May 1st. Abercrombie was to lead against Ticonderoga, with Brigadier Lord Howe as second in command; to command the land forces against Louisburg Pitt chose Amherst, a young colonel, who was made Major General over the heads of many seniors, with Wolfe as one of his three Brigadiers; and a third command, against Fort Duquesne, was given to Brigadier John Forbes.

Admiral Boscawen sailed from Halifax on May 28th, more than two months earlier than Holbourne had sailed on the same errand the year before. His fleet numbered one hundred and fifty-seven sail, twenty-three ships of the line, eighteen frigates, with a total of nearly fifteen thousand seamen and marines, and nineteen hundred and four guns. The great fleet of transports had nearly twelve thousand men on board, all British regulars except five hun-

dred provincial rangers.* Amherst joined the fleet outside Halifax Harbour and took command of the army. This great force sailed into Gaberus Bay, about three miles west of Louisburg, on June 2d. Louisburg, the Dunkirk of America, was considered the strongest fortress on the continent.† So strong did the position appear that Boscawen was on the verge of calling a council of war, but desisted on the advice of a veteran officer, Captain Fergusson, who

"advised the admiral, for his own honour, and the glory of his country, to exert that power, with which he was invested; and not to leave it to the uncertain resolutions of a council of war, which had been so fatal at Minorca, at Rochefort, and even at Halifax, to the disgrace of all concerned and the extreme loss of the nation."

Boscawen was convinced. "Here," said he, "I will abide, and put them all ashore, and cover their retreat, if they think proper to re-embark." ‡ The French forces, under Dracour, consisted of three thousand and eighty regulars, including two companies of artillery, and five ships of the line, and seven frigates, with three thousand men on board and five hundred and forty guns in the harbour. There were two hundred and nineteen cannon mounted on the walls, and a civilian population of five thousand to defend in the town. A landing was effected by Wolfe's brigade without very great difficulty, and Amherst

* Beatson, *Naval and Military Memoirs*, iii., note 121.

† There is an excellent description of the place and siege in Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe*, ii., ch. xix.

‡ Entick, *History of the Late War*, iii., 224, 225.

The Hon.ble EDWARD BOSCAWEN, Admiral of the Blue Squadron.

laid siege to the fortress; Wolfe silenced the Island battery which protected the entrance to the harbour and the French sank four large ships to prevent Boscawen from entering. Two of these were burned by seamen, who rowed into the harbour by night, and as this opened the way for Boscawen the French were compelled to capitulate July 28th.

Abercrombie's attack on Ticonderoga did not meet with equal success. He himself had been appointed through political influence, and had neither the audacity nor persistence necessary for the command of such an expedition. Pitt intended the real command to be in the hands of the young Lord Howe, whom he described as "a complete model of military virtue," whose brave and gay spirit made him the idol of the entire army. Wolfe called him "the noblest Englishman that has appeared in my time, and the best soldier in the British army." The force consisted of more than six thousand regulars, and nine thousand provincials, and on July 5th they embarked on Lake George in nine hundred bateaux and one hundred and thirty whale boats. The army landed with difficulty, but a great disaster befel them on the first day, when Lord Howe was killed in a skirmish. "In Lord Howe," wrote a contemporary, "the soul of General Abercrombie's army seems to expire." Montcalm at Ticonderoga had three thousand six hundred men; he had carefully defended the position where he awaited attack, while Abercrombie had not brought his artillery to the front. The English general was himself a mile and a half to the rear of the fighting, and sent repeated orders

for frontal attacks by the infantry, which only resulted in terrible loss. After losing nearly two thousand men he ordered a retreat. Pitt very properly recalled him to England at the close of the campaign. But the year was not to end without victories for the English on the mainland. Bradstreet, the officer who had carried supplies to Fort Oswego, persuaded Abercrombie to give him three thousand men, chiefly provincials, for an attack on Fort Frontenac on Lake Ontario. By way of the Mohawk and Onondaga he reached the place where Fort Oswego had stood, crossed the lake, and surprised the French fort, which had been neglected. The Governor surrendered and all the French ships on the lake were captured. This was a severe blow as it cut the French line of communication and destroyed their sovereignty over Lake Ontario. It had an important influence on the fate of the last expedition of the year, that of Forbes against Fort Duquesne.

Forbes's army consisted of twelve hundred Highlanders and more than five thousand provincials from the Southern Colonies, with a detachment of Royal Americans, who were largely Germans of Pennsylvania under German officers.* The recruits were very different from those of the northern colonies, where fighting was a part of every man's experience, and the provincial officers were for the most part,

* Pitt in the House of Commons (February, 1756) had opposed the enlistment of these German settlers and the granting of commissions to foreigners. The Agent of Massachusetts supported Pitt's opposition by a petition.

LOUISBOURG MEDALS OF 1758.

according to Forbes himself, "an extremely bad collection of broken innkeepers, horse jockeys, and Indian traders." But Forbes was a soldier of unconquerable determination who looked into all details himself, and was well fitted to make an army out of a mob. Among his chief officers was Colonel Washington, who wished the expedition to take the Virginian Road to Duquesne which Braddock had used. Forbes, however, decided to make a new road through the forest from Pennsylvania. The fort had been the centre of the French intrigues with the Indians which had resulted in so many massacres and marauding expeditions against the English settled in the Western frontier; but Forbes's task was made much easier by the neutrality which three of the Indian tribes were persuaded to declare in November. His great difficulty was in making the road over the mountains, and he was further impeded by heavy rain. Bradstreet had delayed the supplies intended for Fort Duquesne at Frontenac, and when the French realised that Forbes would reach them they blew up the fortifications and evacuated the position. Forbes took peaceful possession on November 25th, and planted a new stockade, which he called Pittsburg, in honour of the illustrious minister. Two hundred men were left as a garrison, lack of provisions making a large garrison impossible, and the force returned home. Forbes himself had suffered from a painful disease, and he was carried on a litter all the way to Philadelphia, where he died in the following March.

By way of one more assault on the French coast,

an "enterprise" (so called because the attempt against Rochefort had made the name "expedition" ridiculous) was planned against St. Malo. A camp of nearly fourteen thousand men was formed in the Isle of Wight, and the command was given to the Duke of Marlborough, who proved himself only the shadow of a great name. Two fleets were assembled at Spithead — the larger, of twenty-two of the line, under Lord Anson, and the smaller under Commodore Howe. Nothing resulted from the employment of this great force beyond the burning of a few privateers. Marlborough quickly returned to England; Pitt had heard of Ferdinand's success at Crefeldt, and now sent nine thousand men under Marlborough and Lord George Sackville to reinforce the Prince. Under General Bligh, the remainder of Marlborough's force again sailed for the French coast. The harbour of Cherbourg was destroyed, and some guns were captured which were afterwards paraded through London. A serious disaster befell Bligh near St. Malo. While re-embarking the troops were attacked by the French and suffered heavily. A loss of seven hundred in killed and prisoners cooled Pitt's ardour for these expeditions, which were never very damaging to the French. If he had been content with naval bombardments he would have secured equal results at less expense.

Ferdinand's campaign was a successful one. During the winter the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel and the Duke of Brunswick made preparations for deserting the cause of Prussia and Hanover, but their treaties of neutrality with France were not ratified,

and they remained allies of Frederick and George. Clermont was appointed to take Richelieu's command.

The army he commanded was in wretched condition, and when Ferdinand with the Hanoverian army advanced in February the French fell back and crossed the Rhine at Wesel. Ferdinand followed and forced Clermont to give battle at Crefeldt. The French were forty-seven thousand against thirty-three thousand, and occupied a strong position, but Clermont was beaten with a loss of four thousand, and compelled to continue his retreat. Belle Isle, now French War Minister, recalled Clermont and sent Contades, a capable general, to take command, while Soubise was recalled from assisting the campaign against Frederick and ordered to march upon Hesse through Hanau. In order to counteract this movement, Ferdinand recrossed the Rhine. At the beginning of his campaign he had sent a requisition to the British Government asking for a detachment of British cavalry. We have seen that Pitt only agreed to send five thousand men to garrison Emden. This fortress was occupied by the French until March 19th, when the garrison was ordered to join the main French army in its retreat towards the Rhine, and Commodore Holmes took possession of it. The way was now open for the dispatch of British troops, and the success of Ferdinand was such that Pitt would have shown an unusual apathy if he had not taken full advantage of it. He resolved to support the Prince in every possible way, and henceforth he takes up the German war as zealously

as Carteret himself might have done. As has been mentioned, on their return from the St. Malo enterprise Marlborough and Lord George Sackville were sent with nine thousand men, including a regiment of Highlanders, to join Ferdinand at Munster. This was about six months after Pitt's declaration that he meant the army for our immediate selves, and would not send a drop of English blood "to the Elbe."

Pitt, on the advice of a Quaker named Cumming, sent a small squadron, under Captain Marsh, of one ship of the line, one of fifty guns, a frigate and a sloop, with two hundred marines and a detachment of artillery, to attack the French settlements of Goree and Senegal on the west coast of Africa. The French made no resistance, and Senegal, an important centre of the slave trade, at once submitted. Marsh then sailed to the south and attacked the island of Goree, but his force was insufficient and he returned to England. Later in the year (December 29th) Goree was captured by a much stronger force which had been sent out under Keppel.

Frederick's campaign during 1758 displayed his great qualities, but produced no conclusive successes. His attempt to take Olmutz failed, owing to Daun's skilful movements, and he turned towards the east, where the Russians had advanced nearly to Frankfort on the Oder. The battle of Zornsdorf was the first in which he commanded against the Russians. His opponent was Fermor, who commanded sixty-nine thousand men, while Frederick had only

thirty-two thousand, and the battle practically lasted three days, beginning the 25th of August. The slaughter was immense, the Russians admitting that they had lost ten thousand eight hundred and eighty-six killed and twelve thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight wounded, while Frederick lost twelve thousand men.* But the victory was really with Frederick as Fermor was compelled to retreat. The Prussian king's absence in Pomerania led the Austrians to make a simultaneous attack on Saxony and Silesia, and Frederick made a rapid march to the Saxon frontier. Marshal Daun, however, succeeded in surprising his camp at Hochkirchen and inflicted a severe defeat (October 14th). Frederick rapidly recovered, escaped Daun's army, and marched on Neiss, a frontier town in Silesia besieged by another Austrian army. He raised the siege, drove the Austrians out of Silesia and marched back to Saxony where Daun was now besieging Dresden, and once more compelled the Austrians to evacuate Saxony. Nothing in his great career is more admirable than the manner in which he stayed the advance of Russians and Austrians during 1758.

Parliament met on November 23, 1758, and Pitt's speech reflects his confidence and determination.

"Pitt opened the business of the session with art, seeming to avoid all ostentation of power, while he assumed everything to himself but the disposition of the money. That load he left to the Treasury, and vast, he said, it would be, heaps of millions must be raised,— thus affecting to heighten rather than disguise the expence and

*Rambaud, *Russes et Prusses*, p. 186.

difficulties of our situation; we could not make the same war as the French, or as our ancestors did, for the same money. He painted the distress of France, and coloured high what had been done by ourselves." *

The estimates voted for the succeeding year amounted to £12,761,310, of which £3,120,000 went to the navy, sixty thousand men, £1,256,130 to the army, eighty-five thousand men, including two new regiments, and £1,238,177 to the pay of the foreign troops. This was an addition of about two and a quarter millions on the previous year's estimates. In France, a larger amount was raised, though much of it went into the hands of the farmers of taxes, and more was wasted by corrupt administration. At this period, however, the favour of Madame de Pompadour fell on a worthier object, and some order was restored in the French Government by the appointment of the Duc de Choiseul as Secretary of State in November, 1758. "Choiseul would have been at any time a remarkable man: by the side of the pigmies of Louis XV.'s Court, he was a kind of great man." † As a Lorrainer he was hereditarily devoted to Maria Theresa's husband, and he signed on December 30, 1758, the third treaty with Austria. The French subsidy was increased, and France was to maintain an army of one hundred thousand in Germany, while she was also to pay the Saxon army and the Swedish subsidy. In return France was to receive nothing; even her conquests on the Rhine were to be administered in the name of the Empress

* Walpole's, *Memoirs of George II.*, iii., 150.

† Martin, *Histoire de France*, xv., 558.

Queen! This also was the period of M. de Silhouette, who, for a time, by a kind of juggling in finance, persuaded the French people that he would raise enormous sums. There was a momentary revival of ardour through the promise of abundant money and the conjunction of Choiseul with Belle Isle, and determined efforts were to be made to redress in 1759 the disasters of previous years. Pitt was equally determined, and the year proved for him the most glorious in his career, though for Frederick it was one of disaster.

The time had arrived for carrying the war in America into the heart of the French possessions, and a very comprehensive plan of campaign was arranged. Attacks were to be made on four points. Amherst, now commander-in-chief in the place of Abercrombie, was to proceed once more against Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and after their reduction to sail up Lake Champlain and join Wolfe before Quebec or assist him by an attack on Montreal which would divide the French. To Wolfe was given the most difficult and important command. In conjunction with a fleet under Admiral Saunders, he was to enter the St. Lawrence and besiege Quebec. Prideaux was to attack Fort Niagara, cross Lake Ontario, descend the St. Lawrence and approach Montreal. Stanwix was to strengthen Pittsburg and attack the French forts between that fort and Lake Erie. These operations assisted one another, but it would have been a miraculous campaign if all the difficulties of transport across wild country had been so completely surmounted as to

allow all four expeditions to perform the entire task allotted. Perfect success was not achieved by them all, but none failed to secure important advantages. "Every colony north of Maryland," says Bancroft, "seconded the zeal of William Pitt." Massachusetts sent seven thousand men, Connecticut two thousand, New Jersey one thousand. The total force employed on the English side numbered about thirty thousand.

In Canada the dangers of the situation were clearly realised. The resources of the colony had long been wasted by the corruption of the leading officials, of the Intendant Bigot especially. Canada as well as France had its Pompadours, there was poverty and scarcity of food among the poorer classes, and little hope of receiving either supplies or men from France; that which had been the weakness of the English in the early years of the war, divided command, was now reflected by the quarrels of Vandreuil with Montcalm; Bougainville, who afterwards became famous as a navigator, crossed to France in order to beseech the French Minister for reinforcements. "Canada," he said, "had been saved thus far by the dissensions of the English colonies; but now, for the first time, they are united against her, and prepared to put forth their strength." And he begged for troops, arms, munitions, food, and a squadron to defend the mouth of the St. Lawrence.*

The reply of the French Minister, addressed to Montcalm, would have afforded an effective justifi-

* *Mémoire au Ministre par M. de Bougainville*, December, 1758, quoted by Parkman, ii., 175.

cation to Pitt, when he defended his famous thesis that America was conquered in Germany. "It was necessary to concentrate all the strength of the kingdom for a decisive operation in Europe; therefore, the aid required could not be sent, and the King trusted everything to his zeal and generalship, joined with the valour of the victors of Ticonderoga." * Choiseul in fact hoped to save America by invading England. Montcalm did his best with the means at his disposal; his total force was nearly twenty thousand and the natural defences of the centre of Canada were very strong. Quebec at the east, the rapids of the St. Lawrence west of Montreal, and the Isle-aux-Noix at the northern outlet of Lake Champlain barred all the approaches. Belle Isle wrote to him: "If we sent a large reinforcement of troops there would be great fear that the English would intercept them on the way . . . . it is necessary that you limit your plans of defence to the most essential points and those most closely connected, so that, being concentrated within a smaller space, each part may be within reach of support and succour from the rest. How small soever may be the space you are able to hold, it is indispensable to keep a footing in North America, for if we once lose the country entirely, its recovery will be almost impossible." †

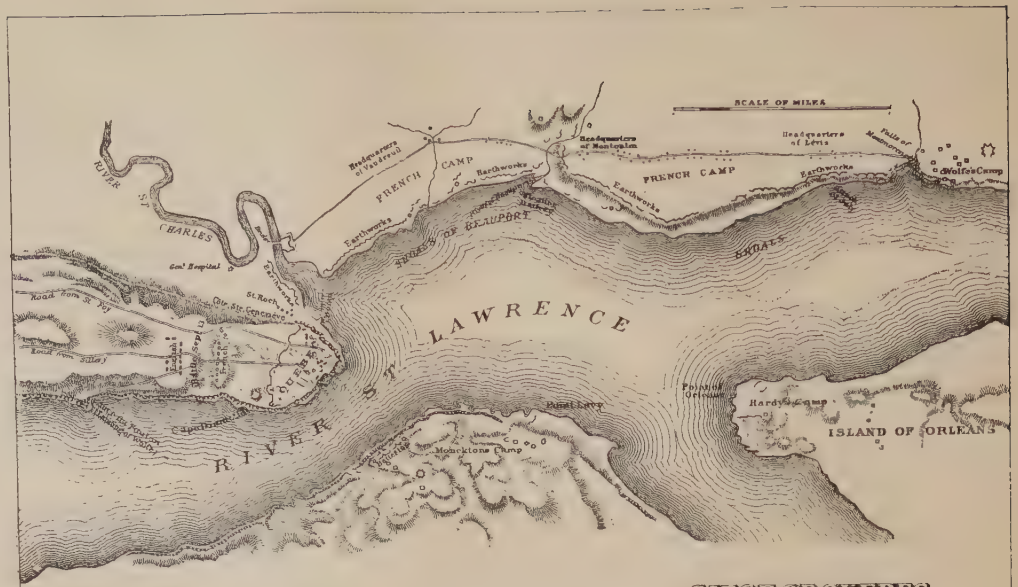
These instructions were followed and little attempt was made to defend the outposts. Amherst with an army of eleven thousand, which he had thoroughly drilled, embarked on Lake George

* *Le Ministre à Montcalm*, February, 1759, Parkman, ii., 175.

† *Belle Isle à Montcalm*, February 19, 1759, *Ibid.*, 177.

towards the end of July. Bourlamaque commanded the French, and had about four thousand men, but in obedience to instructions he fell back on the Isle-aux-Noix, without risking a battle. Ticonderoga was burnt by the French themselves, and on August 1st, Amherst took possession of Crown Point, but after this success, his one fault as a general, exaggerated caution, induced him to remain building forts and armed ships for Lake Champlain, until October. Thus Wolfe, before Quebec, was left without assistance. Meanwhile Prideaux's army had succeeded in capturing Fort Niagara on July 25th, though Prideaux himself had been killed. This success on Lake Ontario completed the severance of Canada from the French forts in the west, and its effect was so complete that Stanwix carried out his expedition from Pittsburg to Lake Erie without opposition. On the death of Prideaux, Amherst sent Gage to take his place, with orders to descend the St. Lawrence and attack the French posts on that river west of Montreal, but Gage found this to be impossible. It was mid October before Amherst himself had finished his boats and forts, and was ready for an advance; his small navy consisted of a brig, a floating battery and a sloop, and against this force the four French ships on Lake Champlain made no resistance. But the weather broke, heavy storms made advance impossible, so that Amherst made no attack on the Isle-aux-Noix, but retired instead to Crown Point in order to finish his fort there.

Thus in his great enterprise against Quebec, Wolfe was left without the assistance he expected. His



SIEGE OF QUEBEC.

1759.

FROM A CONTEMPORARY PLAN.

army consisted of eight thousand six hundred effectives, while Montcalm commanded more than fifteen thousand. The fleet was under Admiral Saunders, and numbered twenty-two ships of the line. By June 26th the main British fleet reached the Isle of Orleans, three or four miles from Quebec, where the army was landed. Montcalm had carefully guarded every point which was open to attack, he had declared that he would play Fabius and not Hannibal, and with a position so strong, and an army so superior in numbers, it was clear that Quebec would not easily fall. The chief incidents of the siege, which lasted eleven weeks, are well known. Wolfe secured Point Levi, without great difficulty and from thence bombarded the town; the French failed in an attempt to burn the English fleet by fire-boats which were sent down the river by night: the English failed in an attack on the French left at the falls of Montmorenci. The days passed and by the beginning of September Wolfe, having altogether failed to draw Montcalm from his defences, and being himself depressed and distracted by severe illness, and convinced that Amherst would not come in time to render effective aid, wrote to Pitt the famous letter in which he despaired of success. He had lost more than eight hundred men in killed and wounded. But he was not the man to leave Quebec without exhausting every possible means, and he resolved on an attempt to land from the river just above Cape Diamond, and to climb the apparently inaccessible cliff to the high ground, which was somewhat weakly defended. Then followed the famous night

attack and battle on the Heights of Abraham, when Montcalm was at last defeated. Wolfe, charging at the head of his favourite Grenadiers, was thrice wounded but lived to hear that the day was won. Montcalm also, the gallant soldier who had struggled so long to prop the declining fortunes of France, received his death wound during this brief but momentous battle. In the Quebec of to-day, which remains the most poetic of New World cities, a stately obelisk commemorates the common death and virtue of the two heroic leaders.

In a few days, Quebec surrendered. This was the most striking and glorious achievement of the British arms, and the news reached London almost immediately after Wolfe's despairing letter to Pitt had been made known. No man could then foresee how influential a deed had been wrought by this decisive stroke in the British conquest of Canada, but the mingled joy and tragedy of the news that Quebec was taken and Wolfe dead appealed directly to the least sensitive imagination. "Men despaired, they triumphed and they wept; for Wolfe had fallen in the hour of victory. Joy, curiosity, astonishment, was printed on every countenance." The Minister and soldier were thought of together and the nation recognised the affinity in spirit between the daring and determined officer and the statesman who, without consideration of parliamentary or family influence, had given him so high a command. Pitt pronounced on Wolfe an elaborate eulogy, which has not achieved immortality, but Cowper united their names in lines that are still remembered when he rejoiced

MONTCALM AND WOLFE MONUMENT AT QUEBEC.

"That Chatham's language was his mother tongue,
And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own."

The ruin of the French naval power involved them in further loss in the West Indies. Their two islands Martinique and Guadaloupe were the centre of a lucrative trade, and the former was the base of a destructive fleet of privateers. In October, 1758, Pitt sent out a fleet of eight ships of the line, with six regiments and a detachment of artillery, which rendezvoused at Jamaica in January and was joined by the squadron stationed there. The troops were landed on the island of Gaudaloupe, when news came that a French fleet of about equal strength with the English had been sighted north of Barbadoes, and Commodore Moore, leaving the troops, sailed for Dominica. The position of the army was then very difficult, but they succeeded in forcing a capitulation of the island on May 1st, twenty-four hours before news reached the French that reinforcements had been landed from Martinique, under protection of the French squadron.

Choiseul hoped to revive the ardour and fortune of France by courageous attacks on her enemy, much as Pitt had trusted to re-creating the warlike spirit of England by taking the offensive against France. It was proposed to make descents on England, Scotland, and Ireland, and during the early months of 1759 fleets of flat bottomed boats were once more constructed at Dunkirk, Havre, Brest, and Rochefort, while the squadrons at Toulon and Brest were to unite in order to form a powerful convoy. Choiseul attempted to strengthen his naval

position by offering Minorca to Spain in exchange for an alliance, and by trying to persuade the Dutch to join the war against England, whose arrogant use of her sea-power had greatly injured the Dutch trade. He endeavoured also to secure the co-operation of Russia and Sweden in the attack on Scotland, but these powers, although members of the Confederation against Frederick, declined to join in direct conflict with Frederick's ally. They made, however, a treaty (March 9, 1759) to which Denmark acceded in the following year, by which they agreed to unite their fleets in order to prevent the entrance of warships into the Baltic. Choiseul's attempts are an anticipation of Napoleon's later designs against England, while the Russo-Swedish agreement was a forerunner of the famous armed neutrality of Catherine. The completeness of England's supremacy at sea under Pitt's energetic Ministry was beginning to create that feeling of universal jealousy in Europe which proved of so great use to Napoleon in his attempts at continental federation against the island power. There is a very interesting memoir by Choiseul, which shows that he at least realised how great was the advance made by the power of Great Britain. He is attempting to persuade the Court of Stockholm to join the proposed descent on the Scottish coast.

"I will end," he writes, "by saying that we in France have no other means of ending successfully a war that is becoming very dangerous to the equilibrium of Europe. We must not deceive ourselves. The true equilibrium depends in reality on commerce and on America. The

German war, even if it be conducted more effectively than at present, will not prevent the evils that are threatened by the great superiority of the English on the sea. The King will impoverish himself in vain. He will, if we are not cautious, see his allies forced to become *not the subsidiaries but the tributaries of Enlgand:* and France will need several Richelieus and Colberts in succession if she is to regain, in relation to the enemy, the equality we are in danger of losing." *

Choiseul's whole plan was based on the hope that the English navy was so scattered that it might be possible for at least one of the expeditions to elude the vigilance of English admirals. His scheme would have been an ambitious one even if France had obtained command of the sea; under the conditions existing it was little better than ridiculous. A royal message informed the House of Commons on May 30th of the French design, and measures were taken to embody the entire militia, while special terms were offered to recruits for home defence. Pitt, it will be remembered, had on a previous occasion drawn an alarming picture of a French invasion, by way of stimulating the popular imagination. In this year England had no need for mercenaries to defend her shores, no panic disturbed the people, and Pitt wrote in an official dispatch to the English Ambassador at Madrid:

"Whatever danger there may be of an invasion being attempted, such is the situation of these Kingdoms by the wise precautions of his Majesty, that the apprehension

* Choiseul to d'Hauricourt, March 21, 1759. Flassan's *Diplomatie Française*, vi. p, 160.

of the consequences of such an attempt neither disturbs nor fluctuates the councils of the King, nor tends in the least to break the measures, or check the vigour of any part of the plan of the war ; his Majesty's regular forces in Great Britain and Ireland amounting to above 40,000 men, 35 ships of the line, besides frigates, equipped and manned for home service." *

Notwithstanding the magnitude of his various schemes, Pitt did not recall a single man from foreign service. It was a satisfactory contrast to the condition of things in 1756, and events showed that the Minister's confidence was well founded. The naval preparations were complete. A squadron under Commodore Boyce was stationed off Dunkirk, while a larger fleet under Admiral Hawke blockaded Brest, and other smaller squadrons watched the port of Vannes. As the larger French force was to embark from Havre, Admiral Rodney was sent to bombard that fort. This he accomplished with adequate effect in July. The French had been for some time equipping a powerful fleet in Toulon, and their one hope of success, either in the attack on England or the reinforcement of Canada, lay in the junction of this fleet with that at Brest. The French admiral at Toulon, De la Clue, had twelve ships of the line, while Admiral Boscawen, who commanded in the Mediterranean, had a fleet of fourteen of the line. An attack on two French ships lying close to the harbour of Toulon led to three English ships being seriously damaged by the land batteries, and this compelled Boscawen to put in to Gibraltar to

* June 5, 1759. Thackeray's *Life of Chatham*, i., 395.

refit. He detached two frigates to watch the enemy, and on August 17th the Gibraltar frigate signalled that the French fleet was in sight. Boscawen at once put to sea, and at daylight sighted seven ships of the line. De la Clue's squadron had been separated in the night. Boscawen gave chase and quickly captured the *Centaur*. He pursued the French fleet all night, and on the following morning the two fleets were off the coast of Portugal, and De la Clue put himself under the protection of a Portuguese fort. The niceties of neutrality law did not appeal to Boscawen, and he continued his attack, capturing the *Ocean* (80 guns, esteemed the best French ship afloat), the *Temeraire* (74), and the *Modeste* (64); the *Redoubtable* (74) was burnt. The remains of the Toulon fleet put in to Cadiz where they were blockaded. This victory of Cape Lagos, in which the English loss was only fifty-six men, was a great blow to Choiseul's ambitions.

It was immediately preceded by an English victory on land. Prince Ferdinand was opposed by a French army of considerably greater strength than his own. At the end of 1758 the chief French army, thirty-five thousand strong under the Duc de Broglie, was at Bergen near Frankfort, while the Marshal de Contades commanded another on the river Lippe. Ferdinand desired to take advantage of this separation, and leaving the British and Hanoverians to watch Contades, he attacked De Broglie on April 13th. The attack was beaten off with heavy loss; the two French armies combined and reduced Munster and Minden. At the last place, Contades, who

commanded the united army, took up a strong position, his right leaning on the river Weser and the town of Minden, his left protected by boggy ground, his front protected by a stream. Ferdinand was inferior in numbers, but by his skilful disposition he deceived Contades, drew him from his position, and inflicted a signal defeat. The English infantry and artillery won great glory, but the cavalry remained inactive owing to the strange conduct of their commander, Lord George Sackville, who declined to charge notwithstanding repeated orders.

Lord George Sackville was commanded home, tried by court-martial, and dismissed from all military appointments. There had been great jealousy between Prince Ferdinand and the English commander, and the apology made for Lord George Sackville was that the superior officer had purposely made the orders given to his subordinate difficult and incomprehensible. When the unhappy officer returned to England in disgrace, Pitt, who had been his friend,

"went to visit Lord George in form . . . He would not, he said, condemn any man unheard. But he was true to the German cause. . . . When Fitzroy returned to the army, Mr. Pitt charged him with the strongest assurances to Prince Ferdinand. 'Tell him,' said Mr. Pitt, 'he shall have what reinforcements, what ammunition he pleases—tell him I will stand and fall with him.'" *

Prince Ferdinand deserved the highest praise, for,

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George II.*, iii., 214.

against heavy odds, he had won a victory which completely changed the situation. Hanover had seemed to be at the mercy of the French, but the battle of Minden turned their steady advance into a retreat, Contades retiring towards the Rhine, and De Broglie upon Frankfort. The campaign, which had promised to be the most successful for France, since that which ended in the convention of Kloster-Severn, was robbed of all appreciable gain. Pitt was delighted by the victory of "our immortal Ferdinand." At the close of the year he wrote to the Prince that, as a good Englishman, he was as warmly affected by Minden as by Quiberon Bay.

While both on land and sea the British and Hanoverian cause prospered, Frederick was sorely beset. This was his fourth campaign, and proved disastrous through the success achieved by the immense Russian armies. Prince Soltykoff was appointed generalissimo of the Russians in succession to Fermor, and his campaign was a strikingly successful one. He advanced towards Silesia, and at the battle of Zullichau (July 23rd) the Russians defeated a much smaller Prussian army under Wadell, and occupied Frankfort-on-Oder, where they were joined by Loudoun with eighteen thousand Austrians. Frederick himself marched to give the Russians battle, but with a much inferior force he suffered the most terrible of all his defeats. For three days he despaired, but his enemies failed to take advantage of his sore straits, when, as he himself said, they had only to give him one finishing blow. But complete recovery was impossible, and the rest of the

year was full of disaster, Daun in Saxony taking Dresden and compelling the surrender of Prussian troops at Maxen and Meissen.

The elaborate scheme of invading England was not abandoned even after the battle of Lagos. It was believed that bad weather in the later months of the year would drive the blockading fleets from off Dunkirk and Brest. A violent gale on October 12th enabled Thurot to escape from Dunkirk; he took refuge in the harbour of Gothenburg, but his voyage round Scotland was tempestuous, and his little expedition only reached Carrickfergus in the north of Ireland on February, 1760, where he landed six hundred men and took a few prisoners. On sailing from the port his ships were sighted by three English frigates and after a gallant fight, surrendered. The same storm in October, 1759, which had made Thurot's escape possible, compelled Hawke to return to Torbay for shelter. With a heavy gale blowing from the west it was impossible for the French to sail, but immediately the gale lessened the French admiral Conflans put to sea. His fleet consisted of twenty-one ships of the line, the English of twenty-three. Hawke sailed from Torbay the day Conflans left Brest, and directed his course to Quiberon Bay where he expected the French fleet to rendezvous; a strong easterly gale drove him far to the west, but the wind veered round and on November 20th his advanced frigates discovered the French fleet bearing north between Belle Isle and the main land. A fierce sea, a treacherous coast, the reefs and shallows of the bay, made pursuit of the French dangerous,

Sir Edw.d Hawke
Admiral of the White.

and they endeavoured to escape by keeping inshore. So dangerous was the coast even in fine weather that pursuit in the midst of storm seemed impossible, and it is said that so little did the French believe that Hawke would dare to follow them that they mistook the van of the English fleet for pilot ships, and could not crowd sail for flight until it was too late. The pilot informed Hawke that he could not obey his order to lay him alongside of the French admiral without danger of running on a shoal. "You have done your duty in pointing out the danger," replied the Admiral, "now obey my command and lay me alongside of the *Soleil Royal.*" Several of the French ships fought with great gallantry, but the result of the fight was never in doubt. This battle was the Trafalgar of the war; the French navy was for practical purposes destroyed, and Choiseul's ambitious projects were finally abandoned. The total English loss was only forty killed and two hundred and two wounded; at so little cost but by unsurpassed daring did Hawke achieve the immense results of Quiberon Bay.

Parliament had met on November 13th, a week before Hawke's victory. Pitt was now at the summit of his fame and the absolute ruler of the House as well as of the Ministry. His name was identified with victory all over the world, and his strong will was sovereign over the military forces and political government of the country. The closing year had been one of unexampled glory. There had been two great naval victories, Madras had been saved from the French, they had been defeated at Minden,

while Goree, Guadaloupe and above all Quebec had been taken from them. And this was the year which Choiseul had hoped to signalise by the invasion of England. In the debate on the address, Beckford, always an enthusiastic follower of Pitt, spoke a glowing eulogy on the Minister, but Pitt was always modest when praised, though the proudest of men when slighted or attacked.

"He disclaimed particular praise, and professed his determination of keeping united with the rest of the ministers. Fidelity and diligence were all he could boast, although his bad health perhaps had caused him to relax somewhat of his application. Not a week, he said, had passed in the summer but had been a crisis in which he had not known whether he should be torn in pieces, or commended, as he was now by Mr. Beckford. That the more a man was versed in business, the more he found the hand of Providence everywhere. That success had given us unanimity, not unanimity success. That for himself, however, he would not have dared, as he had done, but in these times. Other ministers had helped as well, but had not been circumstanced (not so popular) to dare as much. He thought the stone almost rolled to the top of the hill, but it might roll back with dreadful repercussion. A weak moment in the field, or in council, might overturn all; for there was no such thing as chance; *it was the unaccountable name of Nothing.* All was Providence, whose favour was to be merited by virtue. Our Allies must be supported; if one wheel stopped, all might. He had unlearned his juvenile errors, and thought no longer that England would do all by itself; *who had never been subject to a panic, was not likely to be terrified now.*

He stated Prince Ferdinand's army as containing but sixty thousand men ; France, next year would have one hundred thousand — was Prince Ferdinand, therefore, as strong as we wished him ? He did wish ten thousand more could be found for him ; believed France meant to invade us ; though he should not look on the attempt as dangerous if she did. He balanced his attention between the landed and the monied interest ; he did not prefer the monied men and the eighty millions in the Funds to the landed interest, though he thought our complaisance for the former ought to increase as public credit became more delicate. He ended with a mention of peace. Anybody, he said, could advise him in war ; who could draw such a peace as would please everybody ? He would snatch at the first moment of peace ; though he wished he could leave off at the war."*

The acts which followed this speech showed that Pitt's heart was more in the war than in the prospects of peace. The supplies which Parliament granted for the ensuing year rose to the great sum of £15,503,563, an increase of close on three millions on those granted for the year of victory just ended. The British army now exceeded one hundred thousand, with twenty thousand militia. Greater energy, more men and more money were to be devoted to the Continental war, for indeed France offered scarce any other colonies for attack. In the negotiations for peace also we see clearly enough that Pitt was determined to treat his Continental engagements as essential parts of the English policy and conditions of peace. Pitt kept these negotia-

* Walpole's, *Memoirs of George II.*, iii., 215, 216.

tions as entirely in his own hands as he did the conduct of war, and Newcastle, who had innocently enough received information as to these proposals, was compelled to write a timid disclaimer to Pitt, which reads oddly as the letter of the nominal Premier, and shows how completely Pitt controlled the only man in the Ministry who could be his rival. "I would not enter into any correspondence of business," wrote the head of the Treasury, "and relating to peace, with Mr. Yorke, or any of the King's Ministers whatever, upon any account in the world. I am as innocent and as ignorant of everything relating to this affair, if it be of consequence, as any man alive."* Frederick was anxious for peace, his army being now reduced to one hundred thousand, most of whom were raw recruits and his country impoverished by the long war, and Pitt agreed to a joint declaration, which was delivered by Prince Louis de Brunswick to the Ambassadors of the belligerent powers at The Hague in November, 1759. Their Britannic and Prussian Majesties agreed "to treat, in conjunction, concerning a firm and general peace," but the attempt at a congress failed. France indeed wished for peace, but Choiseul had resolved to keep the questions of peace with England and Prussia separate, while Pitt was determined to keep faith with Frederick and to conclude no separate treaty. Moreover the demands made by Pitt were so alarming that it seemed that France had nothing further to lose by the war, whereas Continental victories might make her position stronger.

* *Chatham Correspondence* i., 445, 446.

The death of Ferdinand VI. of Spain (August 10, 1759) improved the international situation of France, and Choiseul's plan was to attempt peace with Prussia through Russian mediation, and peace with England through the mediation of Spain. The victories of Russia had so enlarged her plans of extension that, so far from being likely to serve the purpose of France in this manner, the Czarina now demanded the original kingdom of Prussia for herself, a plan of aggrandizement too great to suit the views of France, and in itself unlikely to recommend Russian mediation to the favour of Frederick. But the new king of Spain was a firm supporter of French interests, and quickly revived the system of the Bourbon compact. While still King of Naples, he had made an indistinct offer of good offices, and he immediately fell in with Choiseul's request that he would negotiate with England. Pitt, however, declined to accede to the request that he should formulate conditions of peace, though in a dispatch of November 20th to the Ambassador at Madrid, he expressed a desire for Spanish good offices. A later dispatch, dated December 14th, discloses a less friendly attitude towards Spain, as the following extract shows:

"Above all, I am to let your Excellency understand that that part of the (Spanish) memorial which declares his Catholic Majesty cannot see with indifference our successes in America, seems very little consistent with the professions in the other part of that piece, where Spain desires to be considered as in a pure neutrality, and as a disinterested equal friend, and, in that quality,

to become an object of confidence to both belligerent powers."

The danger of the change in Spanish rule was thus immediately apprehended by Pitt, and the negotiations through Spain proved as fruitless as those which were jointly attempted by Prussia and Great Britain. Negotiations were in fact illusory when Maria Theresa and Elizabeth on the one side, and Pitt on the other, maintained, in each of the hostile alliances, a determinedly warlike spirit. Frederick desired peace because he believed he could set off the enormous English gains against his own misfortunes, but reduced though he was, he was in no mind to further peace by any concessions of his own. Pitt would not desert Frederick, and would only offer such terms as might have been accepted if Frederick had been as victorious as his ally, so for two more years the war was to continue.

Seeing peace was impossible, Choiseul prepared for greater exertions, and France responded to the call in a manner worthy of high admiration. Silhouette was exposed and her finances were apparently ruined, but the people accepted the repudiation of state-debts; her naval power was destroyed, yet she still attempted to send reinforcements to America; her army, which had suffered so greatly through bad leadership and bad organisation, was once more sent forth to crush Ferdinand and conquer Hanover. Only Prussia itself, with a genius for King, displayed equal persistency under equal discouragement. During this, the fifth campaign of the war, Frederick

by victories at Leignitz and Torgau, did much to retrieve his position against Austria and Russia.

Pitt sent nearly ten thousand horse and foot from England to Prince Ferdinand, whose army now included twenty-two thousand British troops. His campaign consisted mostly of skirmishes, his aim being to annoy the French in their advance on Hanover, rather than to meet them in pitched battle. There were fights at Korbach and Emsdorf, where the Prince of Brunswick and the British troops under him gained much renown, and a more important battle at Warburg (July 31st), where the French lost one thousand five hundred and the English cavalry under Lord Granby made a famous charge. But the result of the campaign was on the whole favourable to the French, as at its close they occupied both Göttingen and Hesse, and thus threatened Hanover.

The year 1760 witnessed the completion of the conquest of Canada, and of the French in the Carnatic. Murray had remained in command of the garrison at Quebec, which was besieged by De Levi, who had succeeded to Montcalm's command. A foolish sortie by the English resulted in defeat and considerably weakened their defensive force, but on May 17th the English fleet entered the St. Lawrence and the French at once raised the siege. They had now only the heart of their colony, Montreal, to defend, and if that fell, not even the square foot of ground in North America, which Montcalm was so earnestly charged to retain, would remain to them. From three directions English armies were approach-

ing; Amherst himself from Oswego, Haviland from Crown Point by Lake Champlain, and Murray from Quebec. On September 8th, they joined forces before the city, which at once capitulated. Later in the year the famous Rogers with two hundred rangers went West and took Fort Detroit. French power in Canada was gone, and only Louisiana remained of the great American empire which Louis XV. had inherited.

The English cause in India, which we left after the battle of Plassey, and Clive's subjugation of Bengal, was advancing in Madras towards a triumphant close. Of the three European Powers, which rivalled one another in the East, the events of the war made England undisputed head. At the close of 1759, an attempt was made by the Dutch to break the paramount power of the English in Bengal. They entered into an intrigue with Meer Jaffier. The trade of their settlement at Chinsurah had been seriously affected by the new privileges granted to Clive; they had observed the natural dislike of the Nabob for his new over-lord and determined on hostile action. This danger was averted by Colonel Forde's victory over the Dutch at Biderra (November, 1759).

The contest with the French in the South was being waged while Clive was completing his ascendancy over Bengal. The French Government at first sent larger reinforcements than the English Ministers, although they failed to respond to later demands for further help. Although inferior in every other part of the world, on the Coromandel Coast

VIEW OF MONTREAL IN 1760.

the French navy was for some time superior in number to the English, Count d'Aché commanding eight ships of the line and one frigate, to the seven ships of the line of Pococke, who had succeeded Watson. This superiority was, however, never turned to advantage, as the French admiral believed it to be more important to preserve his own fleet than to destroy his enemy, with the result that the English operations on land were conducted with the advantages of co-operation with the fleet, while the French were never able to rely on help from Count d'Aché. The naval plan in the earlier part of this campaign consisted of one feature—the attempts of Pococke to compel the French to decisive battle, and the success of d'Aché in baffling this attempt. During twenty-nine months the French admiral only spent twelve days on the Coromandel Coast, retiring, time after time, to the Isle of France (Mauritius). The commander of the French land forces was Lally, a man of Irish Jacobite family who bitterly hated the English. He was a capable soldier of fiery activity, but lacking in qualities of leadership, totally ignorant of Indian warfare, scornful of native assistance, and careless of native pride. He landed at Pondicherry in May, 1758, with one thousand European soldiers (many of them Irish), which was the largest European army landed in India till that day. Fort St. David was promptly besieged, surrendered on June 2, 1758, and was razed to the ground. Lally desired to lay siege to Madras immediately, but d'Aché declined to co-operate. In August, Pococke sighted d'Aché's fleet

and gave chase, but the French escaped to Pondicherry, and the following month sailed to the Isle of France. Lally in December besieged Madras with an army of two thousand seven hundred Europeans and four thousand sepoys, the English force consisting of one thousand eight hundred Europeans and three thousand two hundred natives. The city was gallantly defended, and on February 16, 1759, the arrival of Pococke's fleet raised the siege. Lally's appeal to the home government for fresh help was fruitless. Pitt on the other hand was now alive to the grandeur of the opportunity, and, in October, Admiral Cornish arrived with four ships of the line, and Colonel Eyre Coote landed at Madras with the 84th Regiment, to take over the command. From this point the English were continually on the offensive, and on January 22, 1760, the great battle of Wandewash was fought. This battle was decisive of the fate of Madras, as Plassey had decided the fate of Bengal. Coote gradually reduced the French fortresses in the Carnatic, and in December besieged Pondicherry, where Lally and the remaining French troops had taken refuge. The town was also blockaded by sea, and although the resistance was continued in face of famine and disease, on January 16, 1761, Pondicherry surrendered, and Lally with two thousand French became prisoners of war. Thus ended the French power in India.

On October 25, 1760, an event occurred of the greatest importance to Pitt. George II. died and was succeeded by his grandson. The old King had been for long the bitter enemy of the Minister, who had

made the concluding years of his reign so glorious. But he was a man of sterling qualities, prejudiced indeed, but loyal to his word, and the staunch friend of Pitt when once he had given his trust. "Sir, give me your confidence and I will deserve it," the Minister had said to the sovereign. "Deserve my confidence and you shall have it," was the King's promise in reply, and it was faithfully kept. With the accession of George III. the whole atmosphere of politics changed. The young King cared little for the war, and above all cared nothing for Hanover. Of stronger individual mind and will than his predecessor, his ambition was at first concerned with the enlargement of the royal prerogative, rather than with foreign affairs. From the moment of his accession he was virtuous, conscientious, stubborn, and persistent. In the settlement of all questions that arose during his reign, his character was an important factor, and although his throne was never occupied by a man of purer motives or more immaculate life, few British sovereigns have exercised a less happy influence on the destiny of their kingdom. The narrowness of his mind, his pride, his consciousness of probity gave strength to a tenacious and persistent will. The first two kings of the House of Hanover compensated themselves for the loss of monarchical right by the enjoyment of monarchical privileges in private life; George III. loved virtue and could devote his entire energy to the pursuit of power. His mother had inculcated this equal love for virtue and power, and her scheme had been successfully accomplished. The young King, born and bred a Briton,

felt neither the fear nor the gratitude which the Whig oligarchy impressed on his two predecessors, and he entered into his kingdom with the intention of ruling it. In order that he might approach that object it was necessary that the war should end, as the war meant Pitt, and Pitt, the idol of the people, was too powerful a Minister to accord with the new sovereign's nascent project. It was therefore with a preconceived plan to arrange peace at the earliest possible opportunity, and in order for that to get rid of Pitt, that George III. began his reign.

His mother, the Dowager Princess of Wales, and Lord Bute, who had long been a ruling power in the Princess's household, were prepared to stimulate and assist the King. Lord Bute was destined to play a leading part in the first years of the reign. He was a Scottish nobleman, very vain and punctilious, lacking broad sagacity and wisdom, but with some taste and talent for the engrossing duties of Court ambitions. Few men have been more hated by the English people, but there is little doubt that the grave accusations made against him of corruption and immorality were untrue. The evidence on which they rest is tainted. The part which Bute was called to play demanded talents of the highest kind; he was to follow a Minister whose policy had won unparalleled success and glory, without popularity and with little Parliamentary influence he was to supplant Pitt and the Whig nobles in the Government, gradually to encroach upon aristocratic privilege in the interests of his master, and make peace when war was popular. If he had possessed the courage

and obstinacy of the King, he would have succeeded better, but he was timid and weak, and but for the help he received from some Whigs, such as Fox and Grenville, his task would have been wholly unaccomplished. Bute had been very friendly with Pitt, and supported his Ministry, but some months before George II. died a coolness between them had sprung up.

On October 28th, Bute was sworn of the Privy Council without office. The King received the old Minister cordially and pressed him to continue in office, and there was no immediate change. An incident occurred, however, when his first speech from the throne was being considered by Ministers, which was an intimation of the policy that would be pursued. In the draft submitted to Ministers occurred the phrase, "this bloody war"; this Pitt regarded as an unjustifiable reflection on his policy, and insisted on an alteration. When the speech was delivered his Majesty referred with pride to the victories won, but declared he would have been happier still if he could have found his kingdom at peace; "but since the ambition, injurious encroachments, and dangerous designs of our enemies rendered this war both just and necessary, I am determined to promote this war with vigour." The speech also praised the equanimity and perseverance, almost beyond example, of the Prussian King. Parliament displayed its now customary union in voting supplies, which this year reached the figure of £19,616,119 — an increase of four millions on the sum voted for 1760. The session was a quiet one.

Bute was attempting to divide the Whigs in order that he might rule them, and though outwardly friendly with Pitt, confessed to his intimate Bubb Doddington his design to remove him. Two days after Parliament was dissolved important ministerial changes began. Legge was dismissed from his office as Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had offended Bute in earlier years over a Hampshire election. Lord Holderness, Pitt's co-Secretary of State, was retired on a pension, and Bute took his place, while Lord Barrington became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and two of the younger men who had devoted themselves to Bute, Charles Townshend and Sir Francis Dashwood, received important posts. Townshend was a brilliant wit, eloquent, clever, irresponsible, and unscrupulous, who dealt with politics in a spirit of careless gaiety. Notwithstanding his utterly superficial character he was not without influence on the history of his country, for he played a part in preparing the catastrophe which was to cloud George III.'s reign. Sir Francis Dashwood exercised the vices of his time, but displayed none of its charm; he was neither moral nor competent. The general election followed these changes, and it was carried out under the superintendence of Newcastle and, to a less extent, of Bute. Practically it was not fought on political lines at all, and was remarkable mainly as the first in which boroughs were openly bought and sold to any wide extent. The war still continued on the Continent, and though no pitched battle was fought, the year 1761 was most injurious to Frederick. Ferdinand was more successful against

De Broglie and Soubise. On July 15th, he won the victory of Kirch Daubern, against the combined French armies, but before the close of the year, the French, thanks chiefly to their numbers, retrieved their former position. Even in this languid close of the war the influence of the Pompadour was felt; Soubise and De Broglie quarrelled, as was the habit of French generals at this time, and it was De Broglie, the able general, who was recalled, and Soubise, the hero of Rossbach, who remained in command. But the belligerent Powers were weary of the war, and a more serious effort was made this year to secure peace. Choiseul with great difficulty persuaded Maria Theresa, Elizabeth, and their minor allies to agree in a joint declaration, stating their readiness to treat, and inviting England and Prussia to send plenipotentiaries to a congress at Ausburg. To this the two latter countries readily agreed in a counter-declaration. A preliminary negotiation was also arranged between France and England.

Pitt retained these negotiations in his own hand; he had submitted to Bute's ministerial changes, but in the negotiations for peace he was determined to be sovereign over Bute, as in the conduct of the war he had been sovereign over Newcastle. The negotiations* opened with an offer from France, which was broad enough to prove the sincerity of Choiseul. The French memorial stated that although it was hoped that the separate peace between England and France would secure the general peace of Europe,

*These papers are contained in *Thackeray*, i., 506 *et seq.*, and ii., Appendix V.

yet separate negotiations were desirable, "as the nature of the objects which have occasioned the war between France and England is totally foreign to the disputes in Germany"; and offered as a basis to the treaty that "the two Crowns shall remain in possession of what they have conquered from each other," separate dates during the year for Europe, the West Indies, and the East Indies being named as the occasion on which the conquests should be definitely ascertained. Pitt's reply accepted the general retention of conquests as a proper basis, but demurred to the fixing of specific dates or epochs. He also declared his intention to support his Majesty's allies, "whether in the course of the negotiation . . . or in the continuance of the war." Pitt was planning to conquer Belle Isle, and was anxious to avoid losing the benefit of such a success, which he unduly valued, by fixing too early dates for ascertaining conquests; Choiseul, on the other hand, was naturally anxious not to include in the necessary cessions any further conquests which might be made by England. The plan of a suspension of hostilities during the negotiation was not even suggested. Although no agreement was reached on this question of dates, each Power appointed special emissaries, Bussy being sent to England and Hans Stanley to Paris. Pitt's instructions to Stanley fix two main and essential points for his guidance, firstly, that he is to maintain "constant possession of the strong ground, which the Duc de Choiseul's memorial of the 26th March has given," and secondly that, "whatever shall be happily agreed

between us and the most Christian King, relative to the particular war between the two Crowns, be rendered binding, final and conclusive, independent of the issue of the negotiations at Augsburg for adjusting and terminating the disputes of Germany, and for retaining the general peace thereof." Stanley was also instructed to receive all proposals *ad referendum*, to express the constant resolution of the English King to support Prussia, and further "to give a watchful attention to the conduct and motion of the Spanish Ambassador." There was some delay in Bussy's arrival, a delay which Pitt regarded as an affront, but which, in reality, was an amusing testimony to the awe which was felt by the French envoy for the English Minister. Stanley writes to Pitt:

"The Duke de Choiseul informed me of the awe with which M. de Bussy was struck by you, and said he was not surprised at it, *car le pauvre diable tremblait de peur en partant.* He was so much frightened that he wrote for a passport to return; the Duke showed me this request in his own hand. His reflection upon it was, *Apparemment, Sire, qu'il a déplu à Monsieur Pitt; qui l'aura fait sauter par les fenêtres.*"

Stanley's interview with Choiseul was friendly, but the difficulty of fixing dates was the first barrier to be surmounted. Belle Isle fell to the English invaders on June 7th, and Pitt was doubtless influenced by this to make a concession on the point. The British memorial of June 17th agreed that the dates suggested by France (with the exception of

that fixed for Europe which was already passed) should be the epochs to fix the *uti possidetis*. The conditions attached were first, that the peace should be independent of the congress at Augsburg, and secondly that preliminary articles should be signed by August 1, 1761. "With regard to Belle Isle, his Majesty will agree, in the said future treaty, to enter into compensation for that important conquest." Choiseul's first proposal to Stanley, on the question of compensation for the various conquests which France would cede to England, was given on condition of complete secrecy. The Ministers of Spain and of the Empress Queen were opposing the peace with England, and Choiseul represented himself as struggling for peace with the aid of the King himself, but against the strong influence possessed by the Catholic ambassadors. This "little leaf," as it was called, which was only delivered on the promise that it was not to be urged against Choiseul in any future treaty, made the following proposal:

"Monsieur le Duc de Choiseul propose à Monsieur Stanley : il demande la restitution de la Guadaloupe et de Mariegalante, ainsi celle de Goree pour l'isle de Minorque ; il propose la cession entière du Canada à l'exception de l'isle Royale (C. Breton I.) où il ne sera point établi de fortifications, et fixer cette cession la France demande la conservation de la pêche de morue telle qu'est établie dans le traité d'Utrecht, et une fixation des limites du Canada dans la partie de l'Ohio déterminées par les eaux pendantes, et fixées si clairement par le traité qu'il ne puisse plus y avoir aucune contestation

entre les deux nations par rapport aux dites limites. La France rendra ce que ses armées ont conquises en Allemagne sur les Alliés Britanniques."

Pitt's letter to Stanley on this offer remarked that it opened a most interesting scene, and proceeded to comment vigorously upon the proposals. He made the following very different proposal:

"(i) The cession, without new limits, of all Canada and its dependencies, of C. Breton and all islands in the Gulf and river of St. Lawrence with the right of fishery.

"(ii) The cession of Senegal and Goree.

"(iii) The reduction of Dunkirk.

"(iv) Equitable partition of the neutral Islands.

"(v) The restoration of Minorca and destruction of French settlements in Sumatra.

"(vi) Restitution of all conquests in Hesse, Hanover, and Westphalia.

"On the above points his Majesty's intention will be found fixed and unalterable."

The shock of such different proposals might well have precluded further discussion, but Stanley's letter to Pitt (of July 1st) showed Choiseul in a mood for agreement. He yielded all that was asked for in America except the privilege of the fishery, on which he laid the greatest stress throughout all the negotiations, understanding the importance of the question much better than Stanley desired. His new proposal was that England should name "a port, totally defenceless, at all times in her power," which would serve as a shelter for the fisherman. "Thus far he will go," wrote Stanley, "and I think he will

throw himself into the arms of Austria, rather than proceed further." He agreed to cede Senegal, but demanded restitution of Goree on the ground that France must possess an African port for the shipping of negroes, or the West Indian sugar islands would be without value. On the question of Dunkirk, which was in reality a mere obsolete tradition in English policy, he declined to agree, but made no difficulty about the neutral islands, Sumatra or India. He agreed to restore Minorca, but laughed at the idea that Belle Isle was an equivalent. Choiseul further insisted that the conquests in Germany were of great importance to England, and gave Stanley the impression "that the Court of Vienna, more exasperated than ever, has made a fresh proposal of *dédommagements* in Flanders, for the consequences that may attend the rupture of a separate treaty with us." A few days later Choiseul made the very important announcement that propositions had been opened to France, hinting that if she continued the war, she would have "new allies, meaning Spain." It was this intrusion of foreign matter into the negotiations that proved fatal to peace, as it is unlikely that the small difference between the French and English proposals would of itself have caused Pitt to break off the treaty.

The new difficulty was mentioned in a French memorial dated July 15th. Reference was made to the long standing disagreements between England and Spain regarding certain English settlements on Spanish territory in the bay of Honduras, the

Spanish claim to fish off Newfoundland, and the captures of Spanish ships during the war. These for some two years had been the subject of embittered relations between Spain and England, and the old spirit of Bourbon alliance was risen so high, that Choiseul, much against his earlier views, adopted the strange course of presenting a note in which he stated the Spanish case, and continued: "The King . . . cannot disguise from England the danger he apprehends and of which he must necessarily partake, if these objects, which seem nearly to concern his Catholic Majesty, should be the occasion of a war." This amiable conjunction of the Bourbons raised in Pitt the highest indignation. Abandoning the mannered language of diplomacy, he addressed the French envoy in peremptory tones:

"It is my duty further to declare to you in plain terms, in the name of his Majesty, that he will not suffer the disputes with Spain to be blended, in any manner whatever, in the negotiation of peace between the two Crowns; to which I must add, that it will be considered as an affront to his Majesty's dignity, and as a thing incompatible with the sincerity of the negotiations, to make further mention of such a circumstance. Moreover, it is expected that France *will not* at any time *presume* a right of intermeddling between Great Britain and Spain. These considerations, so just and indispensable, have determined his Majesty to order me to return to you the memorial which occasions this, as wholly inadmissible."

Writing to the Earl of Bristol (July 28, 1761), British Ambassador at Madrid, Pitt declared that

"nothing could equal the King's surprise and regret at a transaction so unprecedented," and instructed him to remonstrate with energy and firmness against the French memorial, unless it was disavowed by the Spanish Court. In reply to the three points in which the Spanish demanded redress, Pitt stated that the Newfoundland fishery was a matter held sacred, and that no concession would be made to Spain, however abetted and supported, and that the restitution of prizes made against the flag of Spain was a matter for the British prize courts to decide. As regards Honduras he would negotiate. The Ambassador was also directed to inquire the meaning of the naval armaments preparing in the ports of Spain. Wall, the Spanish Minister, admitted that the memorial had been presented by Bussy with the knowledge and approval of the Spanish Court, but asserted that it was not believed that it would give offence to Great Britain. France had "spontaneously offered (in case the disputes of Great Britain and Spain should at any time hereafter occasion a rupture between the two Courts) to unite her forces with those of Spain to prevent the English encroachments in America; an offer which the Spanish monarch had received with great cordiality." This was a very significant statement, but the tenor of Wall's answer to Bristol was on the whole amicable. Pitt had expressed himself to Bussy in terms which gave great offence to Spain and France, but he did not allow his indignation to terminate the negotiations with Choiseul. On August 16th, he delivered to Bussy a further reply which

was itself written in a haughty and scolding temper, but was accompanied by a memorial that comprised important concessions. The note to Bussy after justifying the refusal to accept either the memorial on behalf of Spain or any memorial stipulating for the desertion of the Prussian King by Great Britain and stating, what might well have been omitted, that the King perceived that the peace so much desired is far distant, ends by offering a conference on the final memorials of the two Courts. The British memorial made a great concession to France on the fishery question. If Dunkirk were demolished, French subjects were to enjoy the privilege of fishing in the Gulf of St. Lawrence (on condition that they abstained from fishing on all coasts appertaining to Great Britain), together with the privilege granted by the Treaty of Utrecht of fishing and drying on a specified stretch of the banks of Newfoundland. The Isle of St. Pi rre would be ceded as a shelter and port, on the conditions that no fortification be erected, that the vessels of no other nation be admitted, that the possession of the island be not construed as conferring any right of fishing or drying in any other part than that fixed by the Treaty of Utrecht, and that an English commissary be allowed to reside in the island.

On the other most difficult question of the entire negotiation, Pitt adhered to his demand that all conquests in Westphalia should be evacuated, and again proposed that "Great Britain and France shall be at liberty to support their respective allies and auxiliaries in the particular contest for the recovery of

Silesia, according to the engagements entered into by each Crown." In the dispatch to Stanley covering this memorial, Pitt writes:

"After many and long deliberations the advice most humbly offered to his Majesty has been that it is more expedient not to break off at once the negotiation with France on the fact of the *ultimatum* of England without putting once more to the test the too justly suspected sincerity of France, by the great concession on the part of England of a liberty to fish in the said gulfs, and of an *abri* there for the French fishing vessels. . . . I will not conceal from you that little more is expected here from the facility, great and essential as it is, with regard to the liberty of fishing in the gulfs and the *abri* here offered to France than to put that Court more in the wrong, in case it shall reject these so favourable conditions of peace."

The last memorial of France (September 13, 1761) came very near to accepting Pitt's offer. As regards the fisheries, Choiseul asked for the island of Conceau, or if that was still denied, the island of St. Pierre with the island of Maquelon would be accepted as a shelter, on the conditions specified by Pitt. At the same time it was agreed to demolish Dunkirk. On Continental questions Choiseul was firmer. France would evacuate her conquests in countries belonging to the Landgrave of Hesse, the Duke of Brunswick, and the Elector of Hanover, which conquests were connected with the British war, but conquests from the King of Prussia would only be evacuated by the consent of the Empress Queen at

the congress of Augsburg. The French King declared himself willing to stipulate that he would grant no succour to his allies for the continuance of the war against Prussia; but only on the conditions that Great Britain would enter into a like agreement with respect to the King of Prussia. Pitt's reply was a brief one. At a meeting of the Cabinet on September 15th, it was unanimously resolved that "as the Court of France, after so many variations and retractions on her part, during this long depending negotiation, has finally thought fit not to accept the terms offered . . . you (Stanley) are forthwith to demand a passport, and return to England." Choiseul in his last note to Stanley writes that the King of France

"hoped that some more happy opportunity will produce more effectual inclinations to peace, and he has charged me to observe to you that you may assure the King of England that he will always find him disposed to renew the negotiation, and to consent to equitable conditions, which may establish a firm union between the two Crowns."

Pitt's conduct of these negotiations has been severely criticised. It was not in matters of diplomacy that his genius shone. Compromise was foreign to his nature, which loved bold action and fixed conceptions. With no taste for bargaining, he was ready to make concessions, as the history of the negotiations clearly proves, but he expected his concessions to be accepted as final and without criticism. Moreover, his style was unusually direct and

salient, and while Choiseul urbanely hinted his objections the more formal grandees of Spain declared that Pitt's manner was an international outrage. Apart from his methods, which were not calculated to heighten the comity of nations, the principles which Pitt laid down were open to criticism. It has been seen that as regards the restitution of colonial conquests, he and Choiseul reached a practicable agreement; but as regards the European question they were as far apart at the end as at the beginning of their discussion. In the nature of things, this was perhaps inevitable. Each had an ally which was no party to the negotiation, and Choiseul was as determined not to desert the Empress Queen as Pitt was to abide by his engagement with the King of Prussia. Pitt's offer that both France and Great Britain should be free to continue to support their allies was reasonable, but he combined with this an imperative command that France should evacuate all conquests from Prussia. These conquests were made, and were actually administered in the name of Maria Theresa, and France could not comply with the demand without open desertion of her ally. Pitt's insistence on this demand appears the most unreasonable part of his conduct. There is a note in the handwriting of Hardwicke,* in which the Chancellor states that "Stanley did say clearly, and to myself, that he thought Mr. Pitt's manner of negotiating spoilt the peace, and that France, though humbled and weakened, was still a Power which had an existence in the world." The answer to that

* *Memoirs of the Marquis of Rockingham*, October 1, 1761.

criticism, which was just so far as Pitt's manner and phrases are concerned, is in the very substantial concessions which were offered to France after a war of unexampled disaster. The restoration of Guadaloupe, Mariegalante, Belle Isle, and the important privilege of fishing was not such an offer as would be made to a Power which was regarded as finally ruined, and it is by the substantial offers he makes, and not by his idiosyncrasies of manner, that a statesman is to be judged. Judged by this test, it is clear that his terms were such as might honourably have been accepted by France, with one exception, and it is probable that Choiseul would have welcomed them but for the entanglements of the Austrian alliance, and the prospect opened by the Spanish quarrel with Great Britain. In keeping faith with Prussia, Pitt was only observing his treaty engagements, and in his protest against the French adoption of Spain's grievances he acted in a right and proper spirit.

Pitt yielded on the fishery question against his judgment, and a succession of Ministers at the Foreign Office have had reason to regret that the concessions originally made by Bolingbroke at Utrecht were not at this time summarily withdrawn. The importance of the question was better understood in 1761 than 1713, but it is clear that Choiseul was determined to carry the point. Pitt is always credited with the wish to ruin France altogether as a maritime Power, and that was his ambition, but great nations are not ruined by a single war, however disastrous, and Pitt realised as clearly as anyone the

power of revival which France possessed. That revival was easier and more rapid because of the fishery concessions which he was compelled to offer, partly by the firmness of Choiseul and partly by the views of the English Cabinet.

Three days after the meeting at which the decision to break off the negotiation was taken, Pitt and Temple presented their famous advice to the King on the Spanish question. They urged that Spain enforced her demands "through the channel and by the compulsion of a foreign power"; this amounted to "a full declaration and avowal at last made by the Spanish Ministry of a total union of councils and interests between the two monarchies of the House of Bourbon." Their advice to the King was an immediate declaration of war against Spain.*

The Cabinet was startled by this pronouncement. "I submitted my advice to a trembling council," said Pitt some years later. Pitt is said to have received private information of the new Family Compact which had been signed between France and Spain on August 15th.† He did not lay this before the Cabinet, but he showed them a letter from Stanley: "I have secretly seen an article drawn up between France and Spain, in which the former engages to support the interests of the latter equally with her own in the negotiation of peace with England. . . . Bussy was directed not immediately to sign the peace if it could be agreed with England." He could also point to the express state-

* *Grenville Papers*, i., 386.

† See Appendix.

ment of Wall that France had made an offer of guaranty to Spain which had been accepted, and although the guaranty did not refer to the present war, this admission of Wall's was a clear indication that the House of Bourbon was once more united. Moreover, Choiseul had hinted to Stanley that if peace was not concluded, France "would have new allies, meaning Spain." These were overt and grave facts, such as responsible Ministers were bound to consider. Again and again the statesmen of Great Britain were faced by a threatening union of the Bourbon dynasties, and that union had always been considered the most formidable enemy of British interests. France had been driven out of the New World, but Spain remained, and Spain was still the greatest American Power. No one could doubt that the situation created by the new alliance was one which might threaten the duration of England's new dominion in the West. How was the situation to be met? Pitt was for immediate war. Throughout his life he had regarded the House of Bourbon as the enemy which must be destroyed, and his mind harboured no scruples about the justification of war by some irremediable injury or wrong. France had declined peace, and Spain had confessed her union with France: therefore Spain must be punished. "Now is the time for humbling the whole House of Bourbon! We must not allow them a moment to breathe; self-preservation bids us crush them, before they can combine or recollect themselves." It was the passionate conviction and the daring policy of the statesman who by some sublime instinct

realised the destiny of his nation, for in that arrogant utterance of Pitt the history of England during the eighteenth century was epitomised.

Pitt's only supporter was Temple. The King informed Pitt that he would take no resolution with regard to Spain until Stanley was arrived from Paris.

"Mr. Pitt adhered to his paper," writes Newcastle *; "said he would not execute any other measure, and insinuated that the other Secretary of State (Bute) might do it. Mr. Pitt lamented his situation, repented of the difficulties he had been led into by the French negotiations, and was determined now to abide by his own opinion. (After Pitt was gone), Duke of Devonshire and I declared that no consideration or threat from Mr. Pitt should make us depart from our opinion. My Lord Bute said we were right; that the thing was over; that after what happened Mr. Pitt and my Lord Temple could not stay. . . . We both said that, without departing from our opinion, we wished anything might be done to keep Mr. Pitt; my Lord Bute said that was impossible."

Letters arrived from Stanley saying that Choiseul was sincere for peace and that Spain should be dropped. These letters made no impression on Pitt, but the King and Lord Bute laid stress on them. "The King," writes Newcastle on September 26th, "seems every day more offended with Mr. Pitt and plainly wants to get rid of him at all events." On October 1st, he reports that Stanley has returned from Paris, "tending to war not peace." On October 2d, the Cabinet met to decide finally whether

* To Hardwicke, 21st September, *Memoirs of Rockingham.*

Pitt's advice should be accepted, and on their decision to reject his policy, Pitt, with Lord Temple, declared his resolution to resign.

In the Newcastle papers there is a very interesting account of this famous Cabinet meeting, written by the old Duke, who, without fully realising it, had been the instrument of Bute. This was the last council Pitt attended as a commoner, as "the great commoner," who in four years had made himself the most famous Minister of the world and his nation the most powerful. Pitt was not loved in Europe, but the greatness of his action was even more conspicuous from the distant standpoint of foreign nations than from a nearer view. To the enemies of England and himself he seemed the very personification of an unconquerable and ruthless people, to them it must have seemed incredible that the organiser of such victories should sit at the council table almost an alien. Yet such was the case. There was but one man in the Ministry made illustrious by Pitt who was his friend; the others had felt his power and knew his talents, but not one of them understood or liked or trusted him. Newcastle and Hardwicke exchanged volumes of secret criticism upon their colleague, Granville was old and envious, even the calm sense of Devonshire preferred his fellow-duke to the genius who was not formed in the familiar Whiggish mould. Bute and Mansfield watched with sinister complacence the quarrel between the oligarchs whom they despised and the national statesman whom they feared. Pitt, in fact, great though his power had been for a short space,

had never conquered the aversion of the Whig magnates, and now that he had done his work they were willing enough to let him go. For a moment he had imposed his dictatorship upon the powerful class which had never recognised his credentials. He had snatched from fate his hour of supremacy. Before the Cabinet broke up Pitt delivered to his colleagues an intensely arrogant and intensely characteristic piece of eloquence; he knew that his power had other sources than theirs, and this he told them; he knew that his work had been infinitely greater than theirs, and this he told them. Even the hurried memorandum of Newcastle reveals the pride, the tone of mastership, of this historic apology for genius.

"Mr. Pitt recapitulated his own situation; called as he was (without having ever asked any one single employment in his life) by his sovereign, and he might say in some degree by the voice of the people, to assist the State, when others had abdicated the service of it, he had gone through more difficulties than ever man did. Though he supposed it might be good fortune he had succeeded in his measures taken for the honour and interest of the nation. In the execution of those measures he had met with great obstruction from some (hinting at principal persons) who did not wish the success of them. There was hardly one expedition which he had proposed though the most probable and at the last attended with the best success that had not been before treated as chimerical and ridiculous. . . . He more than hinted that the success was singly owing to him. . . . The papers he had in his bag (meaning my Lord Bristol's letter and Mr. Wall's paper) fixed an eternal stain on the

Crown of England if proper measures were not taken upon it. . . . He would not continue without having the direction." *

Pitt accepted from the King a pension of £3000 a year for three lives, and the title Baroness of Chatham was conferred upon his wife. For a time this acceptance by a poor man of a moderate income from the nation which he had served so ably dimmed the lustre of his popularity. It was industriously rumoured that the patriot Minister had been bought, and that having accepted the bounty of the sovereign he would no longer act as the disinterested servant of the people. Pitt replied to his traducers by a dignified letter, addressed to the Town Clerk of London. "Most gracious marks of His Majesty's approbation of my services followed my resignation; they are unmerited and unsolicited, and I shall ever be proud to have received them from the best of sovereigns." The words of Edmund Burke dispose of the question: "With regard to the pension and title, it is a shame that any defence should be necessary." It is really a testimony to the loftiness of the public conception of Pitt's character that, in an age when pensions were so freely given, this pension should have excited any remark.

The glorious administration of one man was ended. From despondency, Great Britain had been raised to the position of first nation in the world; from a condition of lethargy and confusion her army and navy had been urged to victory after victory in

* British Museum Add. MSS. 32929, f. 18.

three continents and on every ocean. The American Empire which had been restricted to the Atlantic seaboard now stretched to the Ohio and controlled the St. Lawrence. To the north and to the west the pioneers of the British race were to receive, as an inheritance, a vast empire bounded by the Arctic Sea and the Pacific Ocean. In India a few scattered factories had been made into an empire and both in Bengal and the Carnatic the foundations of supreme dominion had been surely laid. Above all, Great Britain had asserted more absolutely and more universally than in any previous era that command of the sea which has been at all times the means at once of her safety and of her imperial expansion. There had been admirals as valiant as Hawke or Boscawen, but never before a statesman who had perceived, as Pitt perceived, that the naval force of Great Britain could be used to isolate and conquer the arms of her European enemies in every part of the globe. The navy of France was crippled and her colonies reduced, and when Pitt learned that Spain had joined France he saw that there were fresh worlds to conquer, and that the empire which Columbus had founded would offer rich spoils to the countrymen of Raleigh and Drake.

CHAPTER V.

THE PEACE OF PARIS, AND THE STAMP ACT.

1761–1765.

PITT'S conduct after his resignation, said Burke, set the seal upon his fame. The greatest anxiety was felt by the Ministers as to the effect of his actions in the House, but when the House met Pitt "spoke moderately and not much of his own situation. Not a word offensive to any Minister slipped from him; on the contrary, he spoke with the greatest respect of those who differed from him in Council. In short, he blamed nobody but those who were for ending the continent part of the war, concerning whom he spoke with contempt."* Bute's first aim was to withdraw from the German war, and George Grenville favoured this view, though he dared not openly advocate withdrawal. He hinted that our success was not owing to the German war, but that, said Pitt, was "only saying we have conquered in the wrong way." "If you withdraw your troops all France will illuminate; if feeble or narrow-minded measures take hold of our councils

* Add. MSS. 32931, f. 19. Barrington to Newcastle, Nov. 13, 1761.

we are undone, and I will endeavour to break the heart of him who is so." * Before Bute could complete his plan for abandoning Frederick the Spanish question had become acute. When the silver ships from America had arrived the Court of Madrid assumed a more haughty attitude, and declined to answer the English inquiries as to the terms of its treaty with France.

On the last day of 1761 war was declared. The note delivered to Lord Egremont, by the Spanish ambassador, has been described as his Catholic Majesty's declaration of war against William Pitt; the Count de Fuentes was ordered to declare to the British King, to the English nation, and to the whole universe,

"that the horrors into which the Spanish and English nations are going to plunge themselves, must be attributed only to the pride, and to the immeasurable ambition of him who has held the reins of Government, and who appears still to hold them, although by another hand. . . . The Spanish King's dignity required him to manifest his just resentment of the little management, or, to speak more properly, of the insulting manner with which all the affairs of Spain have been treated during Mr. Pitt's administration, who, finding himself convinced of the justice which supported the King in his pretensions, his ordinary and last answer was, that he would not relax in anything till the Tower of London was taken, sword in hand."

Pitt had returned the answer quoted to only one of the Spanish demands, the claim to partake in the

* Add. MSS. 32932, f. 74. West to Newcastle, Dec. 9, 1761.

Newfoundland fisheries. He referred in Parliament to "the notion that he had courted a war with Spain," and asserted that he had offered great sacrifices in order to secure Spanish friendship (an allusion to the offer of Gibraltar) and had shown patience and long-suffering.

When the declaration of war was announced, which so singularly justified Pitt's prescience, he made a speech very creditable to his fame.

"The moment is come when every man ought to show himself for the whole. I do, said he, cruelly as I have been treated in pamphlets and libels. And the whole! Be one people! This war, though it has cut deep into our pecuniary, has augmented our military faculties. Set that against the debt, that spirit which has made us what we are. Forget everything but the public! For the public I forget both my wrongs and my infirmities." *

"With all his faults," said Newcastle, "we shall want Mr. Pitt if such a complicated, such an extensive war is to be carried on. I know nobody who can plan, or push the execution of any plan agreed upon, in the manner Mr. Pitt did." †

The campaign which followed was brilliantly successful. Pitt himself had planned the conquests in the West Indies. In February, Martinique was conquered,‡ with the Caribbean islands; in August the Havannah fell, the key to Spanish power in Cuba;

* Walpole's *George III.* ed. by E. F. Barker (1894), i., 105.

† Add. MSS. 32931, f. 45.

‡ "The single eloquence of Mr. Pitt can, like an annihilated star, shine many months after it has set. I tell you it has conquered Martinique." Horace Walpole to Montagu.

in September, Ferdinand won another victory over the French at Brückenmüle, and in October, Manila, with the Philippines, was taken from Spain. These glorious results of the policy he had advocated raised still higher the public confidence in Pitt, but the King and Bute, who, after Pitt's resignation, was all powerful, looked askance on the war and persisted in their desire for peace. The Bedford faction among the Whigs were equally anxious for peace, and their leader expressed the belief that England was in danger of over-colonising, and that her naval monopoly was as dangerous to the liberties of Europe as French power under Louis XIV. had been; while Rigby in the Commons lost no opportunity of denouncing the German war. The Spanish side of the war was firmly supported by Bute, and English officers were sent to organise the defence of Portugal, which had refused to take side with Spain and had been invaded. Pitt in a delightful phrase said that England should not take the King of Portugal on her back, but should set him on his feet and put a sword in his hand. It was on the German side that Bute intended first to restrict the area of the war, and though the subsidy to Frederick was paid at the end of 1761, notice was given that the convention would not be again renewed. The enemies of Prussia quickly learned that Frederick was to be abandoned. On this question Newcastle and Hardwicke, who remembered their struggles for a Hanoverian policy in the last reign, differed from Bute, and after submitting to many gross indignities the old Whig chief on May 26, 1762, resigned his

office in the Ministry of which he was the nominal chief. His career had commenced when England was still excited over the Peace of Utrecht, and it lasted till the eve of the Peace of Paris; it began in opposition to the brilliant Toryism of St. John, and ended in collision with the more practical but less attractive absolutism of Bute. Throughout that long interval the Whig oligarchy had ruled the Court and the Parliament, and since the death of Walpole, Newcastle had been the leading figure among the political great families. The resignation of Pitt gave the King sufficient control over international affairs; the resignation of Newcastle signalised the opening of a grand struggle against the Parliamentary system by which a few great peers engrossed the governing power. Bute was at once made First Lord of the Treasury. His first levée was crowded, and members of Parliament who had been elected under Newcastle's auspices vied with bishops to whom Newcastle had given their sees in devotion to the new Minister.*

The remarkable pamphlet published in 1761 by Lord Bath, entitled *Seasonable Hints from an Honest Man*, stated the argument of George III.'s policy almost as plausibly as Bath's former teacher Bolingbroke could have stated it. The bystander, speculating on national politics, has always remarked that there is no deep and abiding principle of party division. Bath had been leader of the Whigs who

* An excellent *mot* on the conduct of the bishops is attributed to Newcastle. "Bishops, like other people," said he, "too often forget their Maker."

overthrew Walpole, and his opposition to the great Whig had been based on the principles of the Revolution. He now contended that the principles of the Revolution were universally accepted, and that Tories themselves were friends of the Hanoverian Succession, were believers in the Established Church and in the toleration of religious dissent. Such being the case, the Tories should be equally eligible for the work of Government, the King should be permitted to choose his servants from all sections of the nation. But before this could be done, it would be necessary for the King to "break all factions, connections, and confederacies," to free himself from the leading-strings in which the Whig oligarchy had put his predecessors. George III. cherished the noble ambition of being sovereign over a united people. The evil of the Whig domination was in the proscription of a large part of the nation, and it was a generous design of the King's to call back from their exile a number of his subjects. But his plan was based upon royal supremacy; his benevolence flowed from a royal will, and would exercise itself through the channels of monarchical influence. While he desired that his people should be united, he desired still more earnestly that he should be supreme sovereign in all departments of Government. The system of the Whigs had been narrow and selfish, but they had always acted through the Parliament, they were identified with a Parliamentary constitution, they had established the sovereignty of the House of Commons, and they held the reins of that sovereignty in their own hands. It was

evident, therefore, that the King could only carry out his plan of reviving monarchical supremacy if he secured the interest and support of those who controlled the House of Commons. If the entire body of Whigs had been faithful to the principles of their creed, if they had been united in one party, they could have defeated the King's aim of ruling by Ministers of his own choice. But their division into connections held together by ties of birth, competing one against the other for the spoils of office, enabled the King to play off one faction against the other. He became the powerful arbiter. A yet more effective method of undermining the supremacy of Parliament was also borrowed from the Whig code of political strategy. A party in the House of Commons under direct command was secured by nominating members for the Treasury boroughs, which had previously been the province of the First Lord, and this was the nucleus of the body known as King's friends, who voted as the sovereign pleased. Hitherto, "the Court" had meant the supporters of Government, but George III. was himself the leader of a party, and the friends of the Court were distinct from the friends of the Minister. Corruption in all its forms, from the gift of a bank-note to the promotion of a relative, was freely practised in order to enlarge and consolidate the King's party, and any offensive display of independence was promptly and openly punished. The scrupulously moral King never hesitated to use bad men as his instruments, and felt no shame in corrupting the representatives of his people.

The first achievement on which the King was set was the conclusion of peace. In the year which produced the greatest victories of the war the sovereign and his Minister were thinking only of peace. Having decided to abandon Frederick, Bute had removed the difficulty which had proved insurmountable in the negotiation of Pitt with Choiseul, and the immediate victories of the navy soon convinced France that the Spanish alliance was of no great value, while Spain found that she could not conquer Portugal, and that her great colonial possessions were exposed. The conduct of Bute was not likely to convince the enemies of Great Britain that they must submit to ignominious terms. During 1762, he attempted to renew negotiations through the Sardinian Ambassadors at London and Paris, the Count de Viri and the Bailli de Solar, and through this channel Choiseul was acquainted with the dissensions in the British Cabinet. Bute also instructed Sir J. Yorke to treat privately with the Court of Vienna, without the knowledge of Prussia — a disingenuous action which enraged Frederick when he heard of it — and actually stated to M. Alt, Minister of Hesse at St. James's, "that we are unable to go on with the war."* He was also accused of urging on the Russian ambassador in England that Russia should remain firm to the Austrian Alliance, in order that Prussia might be intimidated into peace. Thus France and Spain, while depressed by defeat, were buoyed up by the knowledge that the chief Minister

* See *Rockingham Memoirs*, i., 97, 98. Bute himself denied these accusations: Bisset's *Mitchell*, ii., 299.

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THE EARL OF BUTE.

FROM THE PAINTING BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

of Great Britain was determined on peace. In his relations with other politicians Bute had no difficulty in securing a strong peace party. Though he had quarrelled with the leading Whigs, who were in the direct apostolical succession, and though Pitt and the trading classes were against him, he had the hearty support of the Bedfords and Fox, and had broken the ranks of Pitt's old allies by securing George Grenville, who on Newcastle's resignation had been made Secretary of State. Grenville had held an important place in Pitt's Ministry, but he now discovered that the war was mistaken and disadvantageous, and lost no opportunity of denouncing it. When negotiations were formally renewed, Bedford was sent to Paris as special envoy (September, 1762) and the Duc de Nivernois came to London. Bedford had been more eager for concessions to France and Spain than Bute himself, and was even desirous that the Havannah should be restored to Spain without compensation. On this, however, he was overruled, and through the influence of Grenville Florida was secured as compensation for the richest possession of Spain. The negotiations were quickly brought to a conclusion, and preliminaries arranged.

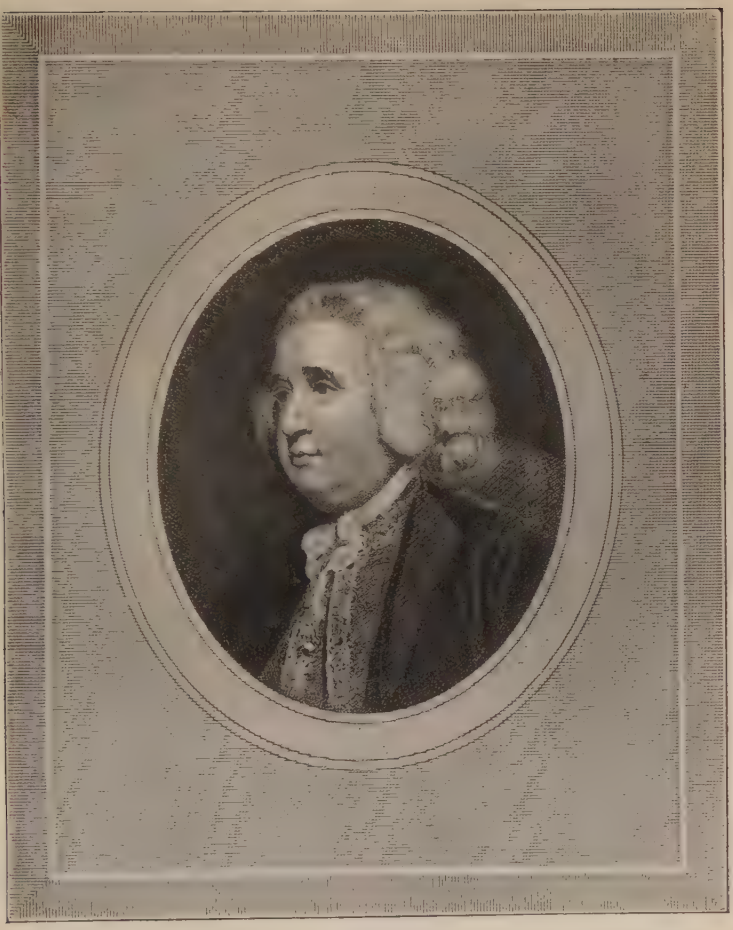
The peace, accepted after a year of splendid victory, was less advantageous than that rejected by Pitt. France restored Minorca and ceded Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, Canada, the islands of Grenada, together with Senegal, and evacuated all conquests belonging to Hanover, Hesse, Brunswick, and Prussia: at the same time, it was agreed that the British and French armies should be withdrawn from

Germany. In India, conquests made by either nation since 1749 were restored, and France engaged not to erect fortifications in Bengal. The Havannah was restored to Spain in exchange for Florida. Portugal was restored to the *status quo ante bellum.* Gaudaloupe, Belle Isle, Desiderade, Mariegalante, Martinico, St. Lucia, and Goree were restored to France. The Newfoundland fishery was permitted to France exactly as on the terms of Utrecht, and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence at a distance of three leagues from British coasts. Two islands, St. Pierre and Miquelon, were granted as a shelter for French fishermen. Dunkirk was to be reduced. Spain withdrew the claims made on Great Britain, and the latter agreed to demolish the fortresses erected on the bay of Honduras, where the British right to cut logwood was acknowledged. There were important differences between the terms of Pitt and Bute. With regard to Prussia, Pitt stipulated for the evacuation of all fortresses conquered by France from Frederick, and the right of both France and Great Britain to assist their allies; Bute agreed to withdraw British troops from the Prussian cause. Bute restored Martinique and Goree without compensation, relaxed some of the fishery conditions, but secured a wider delimitation of Canadian boundaries. In India Pitt had proposed to leave the settlement to the French and English companies.

The peace is one of the great epochs in the growth of the British Empire, and the acquisitions under it were vast. Carteret, on his death-bed, chanted a pæan of praise and rejoicing over the glory of his

country. Yet the announcement of its terms occasioned great popular discontent; the trading classes were enraged that the monopolies they anticipated were not maintained; politicians, acquainted with the papers in Pitt's negotiation, saw with amazement that France came off the better for an extra year of defeat. The army and navy knew that the conquest of Martinique and the Havannah had cost many gallant lives, yet both were restored, and to the amazement of all it was found, when news of the conquest of Manilla arrived, that no stipulation had been made for compensating that conquest, and the Philippines were handed back to Spain in exchange for a ransom that was never paid. The situation resembled that after the signing of the treaty of Utrecht; in both cases a glorious war was followed by an unsatisfactory peace, but in reality the latter peace was more open to criticism, as it was easier for Great Britain to maintain colonial acquisitions than to improve Continental victories, and of more vital importance both to her trade and to her maritime power that she should retain every such advantage won. Choiseul is entitled to the gratitude of his countrymen for the way he conducted the negotiation; Pitt perhaps aimed too high, but Bute, Bedford, and the King allowed legitimate advantages to slip through their hands, and weakly surrendered much which the valour of British forces had won. If Pitt had remained in office and had received the support of George III. there is little doubt that Cuba and the Philippines would have been added to the British Empire. *Dis aliter visum.*

Having made his bargain, it was necessary for Bute to obtain the approval of the House of Commons, and the unpopularity of the peace, together with the declared disapproval of the most eminent Whigs, made it necessary to take strong precautions against adverse action by the House. The irony of his fate made the former rival of Pitt, Henry Fox, the chief instrument in the hands of the King at this time. A strong, unscrupulous, and able leader was required to face Pitt in the House. George Grenville was not powerful enough for such an occasion, and himself thought the peace inadequate. Fox was the only man of sufficient authority; his will was strong, his conscience flexible; he reverenced no political principles and never pretended that he did. His great ability and power, coupled with the absence of all scruple, made him an ideal ruler of the House from Bute's point of view. Lord Shelburne made his entrance into politics by arranging the terms agreed upon between Bute and Fox; Fox was to be leader in the House, to enter the Cabinet, to retain his office as Paymaster and after the approval of the peace to receive a peerage as his reward. George Grenville, displaced from the leadership, took the minor office of the First Lord of the Admiralty. His union with Bute lost Fox his chief political friendships, as both Cumberland and Devonshire, two of the most honourable men in politics, disapproved the peace and despised Bute. Lord Waldegrave, to whom Fox also applied for support, declined to have anything to do with the new coalition. "Had the peace been instantaneously proposed



HENRY FOX.

FROM THE PAINTING BY BENTLEY.

to the House of Commons, there is no question but it would have been rejected; so strong a disgust was taken at the union of Bute and Fox."* Estranged from the most high-minded of the Whigs, Fox threw himself into the service of Bute with great ardour, and energetic means were adopted to secure support and silence opposition. Money was openly given at an office specially reserved for the purpose to members of Parliament, votes ranging in value from the sum of £200 upwards, and the total amount expended in this manner reached £25,000. Those who opposed the new Government were dismissed from any offices they held; the greatest names among the Whigs, Devonshire, Newcastle, and Rockingham, were removed from the list of Lord Lieutenants, and Devonshire was struck off the Privy Council. Fox even desired to remove his opponents from places which by their patents were expressly granted for life. The proscription included all who were related to the rebellious chieftains, and no man was too poor to escape deprivation of his place or pension if he was known to be dependent on Newcastle or Devonshire. Fox was very thorough, he knew his world, and was confident that fierce persecution, while it made a few martyrs, would create many friends. "You will have thousands," he wrote to Bute,† "who will think the safety of themselves depends upon your Lordship, and will therefore be sincere and active friends." The Commons rallied to the Court, and the peerage kissed the

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George III.*, i., 156.

† Fitzmaurice's *Shelburne*, i., 180.

rod. Only a small minority remained true to their convictions.

In the midst of this exciting episode Pitt's position was a remarkable one. His attitude towards the policy of the King and Bute was not so entirely hostile as that of the traditional Whigs. He had never been averse from the Tories, had mixed with them in his Leicester House days, and had received their support during his administration. The very fact that he was without family connection himself made him rather scornful of the little groups into which the Whig party was divided, and though a more eloquent expounder of the principles of the Revolution never spoke in the House of Commons, yet Pitt was never absorbed into any coterie of the Whigs. Just as Cromwell shook off many tenets of the Parliamentary party and outgrew the precision of sectaries, so Pitt was too self-reliant to regulate his political conduct and conceptions according to the exact standard of the Pelhams or Cavendishes. There are men who never take part in any revolution, who nevertheless may be called revolutionary, men of such fiery spirit and conviction that even the love of established order, and all that is involved in it, would not deter them from fierce action in any time of stress. Such an one was Pitt, a man whose words, theatrical as they seemed at times, always represented the deepest realities to himself, whose love of liberty meant that he would have gone with a glad spirit to the scaffold, whose patriotism was a burning passion. This depth and ardour separated him from the Whigs, who were the coldest of politicians, who

when they imagined the Constitution in danger were satisfied if some man of good family uttered a gentlemanlike protest in the Commons. Pitt never really gave his entire adhesion to the Whig party, and that party never trusted him. But if he sympathised with the King's ideas on the subject of party, he was a most determined opponent of the system by which Bute was attempting to annihilate the influence of Parliament, and meant to arraign the peace inflexibly.

After the dismissal of Devonshire an attempt was made to organise a constitutional opposition. Newcastle and Hardwicke were in close contact with the Duke of Cumberland and the latter, who had never been blind to Pitt's strength, though he had opposed his policy, was now perfectly willing to act with the popular leader. Thomas Walpole was sent to ascertain Pitt's sentiments, in order that he might be persuaded to act in concert with the opposition Whigs in Parliament. Many such emissaries were dispatched to Pitt in following years, and they always found the statesman difficult and perverse in negotiation. Pitt would receive such messengers in state, enthroned amidst all the majesty of invalidism, and would deliver an impressive harangue on his own pathetic circumstances and the unhappy fate of his country, but the conclusion of the whole matter remained confused and indefinite. Possibly his distrust of party government arose in part from the fact that he never possessed any party following of his own. To Thomas Walpole his reply was intensely characteristic. Lately he said he had been

applied to by persons of high rank to concur with Bute, with offers much above his deserts. He had told them that Lord Bute would not expect him to concur in the transcendency of power his Lordship had arrived at. On the day of his Majesty's accession he had told Lord Bute that his advancement would not be for the King's service, and had repeated that opinion when Lord Bute came to tell him he had received the seals as Secretary of State. Now that Lord Bute was arrived at the fulness of power, he insulted the nobility, intimidated the gentry, and trampled on the people. He would never contribute to that yoke Lord Bute was laying on the neck of the people. He blamed Devonshire, Newcastle, and Hardwicke for their disposition to the peace, and passed some strictures on the treaty.

"Mr. Pitt then returned to the domestic part—expressing his apprehension that the distinction of Whig and Tory was rising as high as ever; that he lay under great obligations to many gentlemen who had been of the denomination of Tories, but who, during his share of the administration, had supported the Government upon the principles of Whiggism and of the Revolution; that he would die a Whig, and support invariably those principles; yet he would concur in no proscriptive measures; and though it was necessary Lord Bute should be removed . . . he might not think it quite for his Majesty's service to have the Duke of Newcastle secured there. . . . With regard to himself, he had felt inexpressible anxieties at holding office against the goodwill of the Crown; that he would never put himself in that situation, nor accept of any employment whilst his

Majesty had that opinion of him which he was acquainted with." *

The preliminaries of peace were signed on November 3d and Parliament met on the 25th. A great mob crowded from Charing Cross to Parliament Square, and Bute was grossly insulted on his way to and from the House of Lords. A noble battle was expected between the forces of Bute and the Dukes, but the greatest curiosity was felt as to Pitt's conduct. On December 5th, Thomas Hervey wrote to Pitt:

"When I read the preliminaries of our precipitated peace, I could not avoid saying what Antony says over the corpse of his friend Cæsar — Alas, great Pitt! Are all thy conquests, glories, trophies, spoils, shrunk to this little measure? . . . What part you intend to take upon this emergency is a point that puzzles our ablest politicians. New rumours and surmises are daily set on foot and circulated, and they are agreed in nothing, but their impatience for the event. You are still beloved and reverenced by the patriot band, and still possessed of a dignity never conferred on any other man; that of being deemed and even called the People's Minister." †

Chesterfield anticipated a stormy session, "if Mr. Pitt takes an active part; but if he be pleased, as the Ministers say he is, there is no other Æolus to blow a storm. The Dukes of Cumberland, Newcastle and Devonshire have no better troops to attack with

* *Rockingham Memoirs*, i., 149, 150. "Mr. Pitt affected to be a Chief without a party, and the party without him had no other Chief." Walpole's *Memoirs George III.*, i., 174.

† *Chatham Correspondence*, ii., 197, 198.

than the militia; but Pitt alone is *ipse agmen*." * On December 9th both Houses were moved to express approbation of the peace. In the Lords, Bute and Mansfield made an able defence, and the motion was carried without a division, though Hardwicke declared that the treaty was "worse than could have been obtained the last year." In the Commons there was a crowded attendance, but it was noticed when the sitting opened that the great commoner was not present. Fox had purchased his majority, but even he must have felt some anxiety about the effect of that oratory which so many times had dominated the representatives of the English people. A motion was made by Beckford to refer the preliminaries to a Committee of the whole House, evidently with the intention of gaining time. While this was being discussed, a great shout of applause was heard from the lobby.

"The doors opened, and at the head of a large acclaiming concourse was seen Mr. Pitt, borne in the arms of his servants, who, setting him down within the bar, he crawled by the help of a crutch, and with the assistance of some few friends, to his seat; not without the sneers of some of Fox's party. In truth, there was a mixture of the very solemn and the theatric in this apparition. The moment was so well timed, the importance of the man and his services, the languor of his emaciated countenance and the study bestowed on his dress, were circumstances that struck solemnity into a patriot mind, and did a little furnish ridicule to the hardened and insensible. He was dressed in black velvet, his legs

* *Chatham Correspondence*, ii., 196.

and thighs wrapped in flannel, his feet covered with buskins of black cloth, and his hands with thick gloves." *

Pitt's speech was a masterly survey of the various questions raised by the treaty, and condemned it unstintedly. But it was not one of his greatest efforts in oratory, and through his weakness was in part delivered sitting. The speech † reveals his commercial ideas, which were those of his day. He believed in monopoly, and there was no suggestion in his mind of modern free-trade ideas. His system was a simple one; he would conquer the territory of his commercial rival and rigorously exclude all foreign traders from the trade centres. Thus he said that the war had given us possession of the four French trades. Newfoundland, the West Indies, Africa, and India—such conquests ought to give the fisheries, sugar, and slave-trade and the trade of the Indies exclusively to Great Britain. The surrender of her islands as shelter for French fishermen would enable France to recover her marine. "In the negotiation he had with M. de Bussy, he had acquiesced in the cession of St. Pierre only; after having several times in vain contended for the whole exclusive fishery; but he was overruled, not by the foreign enemy, but by another enemy." He ridiculed the idea that Florida was proper compensation for the Havannah, the conquest of which, he said, he had himself designed. He had been blamed for

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George III.*, i., 176.

† The accepted version of the speech is in Almon, marked M. S. Horace Walpole gives an account in *George III.*, i., 175 *et seq.*

giving up Guadaloupe, but Martinique also was now ceded. "Why did they permit the forces to conquer Martinique if they were resolved to restore it?" St. Lucia, which was restored to France, was the only valuable one of the neutral islands. The following passage, full of the prevalent theories of the mercantile system, states Pitt's theory of colonies and commerce:

"The Ministers seem to have lost sight of the great fundamental principle, that France is chiefly, if not solely, to be dreaded by us in the light of a maritime and commercial power; and therefore by restoring to her all the valuable West Indian islands, and by our concessions in the Newfoundland fishery, we have given to her the means of recovering her prodigious losses, and of becoming once more formidable to us at sea. The fishery trained up an innumerable multitude of young seamen, and the West Indian trade employed them when trained. After the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, France gained a dreaded superiority over us in this lucrative branch of commerce, and supplied almost all Europe with the rich commodities which are produced only in that part of the world. By this commerce she enriched her merchants and augmented her finances. The state of the existing trade in the conquests of North America is extremely low; the speculations as to the future trade are precarious, and the prospect, at the very best, is low. We stand in need of supplies which will have an effect certain, speedy and considerable. The retaining both or even one of the considerable French islands, Martinique or Guadaloupe, will, and nothing else can, effectually answer this triple purpose. The advantage is immediate. It is a matter not of conjecture but of

account. The trade with these conquests is of the most lucrative nature, and of the most considerable extent; the number of ships employed by it are a great resource to our maritime power; and what is of equal weight, *all that we gain on this system is made four-fold to us by the loss which ensues to France.*"

It it interesting to compare this passage with words written by Pitt to Sir Benjamin Keene at the beginning of his Ministry, in which he bewails that the balance of power is overthrown, and the Barrier Treaty no more, which had seemed to English statesmen, in the days of Louis XIV., the indispensable defence against French expansion. Pitt's expression of despair was the last echo of that creed. The war had as it were changed the scene of the ancient rivalry between France and England; in directing a great policy, Pitt had learnt that the balance of power in the Old World might be redressed in the New, and that the barrier treaties of Europe were less important to England than the expanding frontiers of her own colonial empire. While the commercial theories of the speech were based on an economic ideal that had served its purpose and was becoming obsolete, the foundation of its political argument was the statement that her colonies, her sea-power, and her commerce were the true bases on which the greatness of England should be builded, the intermingling springs which should feed the great stream of her abounding energy and life.

In another very interesting passage, Pitt dealt with the European situation. It had been urged that the German war had overturned the balance of

power sought for in the reigns of William and Anne. Pitt answered that since those days France had declined so as to be no longer a terror to Europe, and that the military power of the Dutch had been extinguished. Two great Powers had started up. That of Russia "moves in its own orbit extrinsically of all other systems; but gravitating to each according to the mass of attracting interests it contains" — a description as true of Russia in the nineteenth as in the eighteenth century. "Another Power, against all human expectation, was raised in the House of Brandenburg, and the rapid successes of his Prussian Majesty prove him to be the natural assertor of Germanic liberties against the House of Austria" — a prophecy fulfilled on the field of Sadowa. Pitt described the desertion of Prussia as insidious, tricking, base, and treacherous. Bute defended it on the technical ground that Great Britain only bound herself to pay the subsidy year by year and was not pledged to continue it indefinitely, and also argued that as by the death of Elizabeth, Russia had become first friendly to Prussia, and on the accession of Catherine neutral, the situation was altogether changed.* But the ungenerous character of his policy towards an ally who had suffered so much could not be concealed, and Frederick never trusted Great Britain again. Pitt left the House after his speech and was again loudly cheered by the crowd in the lobby. When the House divided, 319 approved the peace and only sixty-five voted in the

* Bute's defence may be read in his dispatch to Mitchell (May 26, 1762); Bisset's *Memoirs of Sir Andrew Mitchell* (1850), ii., 294.

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AUGUSTA, PRINCESS OF WALES.

FROM THE PAINTING BY J. VAN LOO.

minority. So great was the power of Fox and the Treasury. "The Ministers," wrote Walpole, "ordered that the numbers on the question should be printed—had they printed the names too, the world would have known the names of the sixty-five that were *not* bribed." "Now," said the Princess Dowager, "my son is King of England."

The remainder of the session was very stormy, owing to the incapacity of Sir Francis Dashwood, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The main feature of his financial measures was the tax on cider, which he is said to have adopted because he could not understand any of the others that were explained to him by the officials. This raised a great outcry in the western counties, and was more dangerous to the Ministry than the peace itself. Together with this a storm of angry feeling was raised against the Scots, who were being given pensions and places with a lavish hand by Bute. Pitt never countenanced this ignoble prejudice, and was always ready to praise the characteristic virtues of the Scottish people. But he joined in the opposition to the Cider Bill, and an amusing incident occurred in the House during the debate. George Grenville argued that the tax was unavoidable. "Where," he asked, "can you lay another tax? Tell me where." And he repeated the words "tell me where" several times in his querulous, languid, fatiguing tone. Pitt, who sat opposite to him, mimicking his accent aloud, repeated these words of an old ditty: "Gentle shepherd, tell me where!" * The name gentle

* Walpole's *Memoirs George III.*, i., 197, 198.

shepherd was generally adopted as Grenville's nickname. But the Ministry, which had started the session so strongly, after a few months showed signs of weakness. Bute and Fox were on bad terms, and Fox never recovered political influence after his unscrupulous management of the House over the peace. The favourite was shaken by the growing popular anger, and believed that if he quitted the Government he would withdraw all unpopularity from the King. On April 8, 1763, the world was amazed by the intelligence that Bute had resigned. George Grenville was made First Lord of the Treasury and leader of the House of Commons, and Lord Sandwich, one of the ablest but least reputable of the King's devoted followers, became First Lord of the Admiralty. Lord Egremont, a leading Tory, and Lord Halifax were Secretaries of State. Some members of the Bedford party took office, but the Duke himself declined the post of President of the Council. Fox entered the House of Lords as Lord Holland. Fifty-two thousand pounds a year were granted in reversions to followers of Bute and Fox.

Parliament was prorogued on April 19, 1763, and the King's speech referred in glowing terms to the peace, and stated that the Peace of Hubertsburg between Austria and Prussia had been made by the mediation of Great Britain. This led to the famous No. 45 of the *North Briton*, a paper conducted by J. Wilkes, M. P. for Aylesbury, which had been famous for its virulent attacks on Bute and the Scots. Wilkes in strong terms condemned what he described as the Minister's speech, and characterised the

statement or insinuation that the King's negotiation had secured the peace between Prussia and her enemies as an infamous fallacy. "I am in doubt whether the imposition is greater on the sovereign or the nation." The attack on the speech was very strongly worded, but it was an attack not on the sovereign but on ministers, whose responsibility for the King's speech in Parliament had been frequently admitted. The ideas of the Court, however, which desired to make the King more prominent than his Minister, led that party to treat the article as a libel on the King himself. It was determined to crush Wilkes. A general warrant signed by the Secretary of State was issued, ordering the arrest of the authors, printers, and publishers of the paper, but mentioning no names. Under this Wilkes, with forty-eight other persons, was arrested and taken before Lord Halifax. His conduct illustrated those qualities of wit, courage, readiness, and insolence which in the following years made him a prince among demagogues, the darling of the mob, and the astute assertor of all legal privileges. He immediately pleaded his privilege against arrest as a member of Parliament and the illegality of a general warrant, not mentioning the name of the accused, while in the presence of Lord Egremont, he asked that he might be confined in that room in the Tower which Egremont's father, a Jacobite, had occupied, or at least in one in which no Scot had been imprisoned, if such an one could be found. Having sought out a writ of *habeas corpus*, he was brought before the Court of Common Pleas, and was released on the

ground that privilege of Parliament made illegal the arrest of a member, except on charges of treason, felony, or breach of the peace, or refusing to give surety of the peace. Wilkes followed up this great triumph by bringing an action against the Under Secretary of State, Wood, and Lord Halifax for illegal arrest. Against the former he obtained £1000 damages, while Halifax, by ingenious pleading, obtained a delay in the action against him. Chief Justice Pratt pronounced that warrants to seize papers on a charge of libel were illegal, and expressed the same opinion in regard to general warrants issued by the Secretary of State. The King retaliated on Wilkes for these victories by dismissing him from his colonelcy in the Buckinghamshire militia. Temple, ordered as Lord Lieutenant of the County to inform Wilkes, did so in a letter of compliment, and was himself struck off the Privy Council and the roll of Lords Lieutenant.

These events occupied the summer of 1763. Grenville had come into office under the auspices of Bute, and as he himself said, "to prevent any undue and unwarrantable force being put upon the Crown."* His stiff and masterful character soon showed the King that he would prove no pliant tool in the hands of his sovereign, and though George III. liked the business-like mind of his Minister, he did not appreciate a dictatorial style in the closet. The death of Lord Egremont in August made a vacancy and Bute was ordered to sound Pitt. On August 25th Bute saw Pitt, and on the

* *Grenville Papers*, ii., 106.

following day the King informed Grenville that he intended to call in Pitt, but "to do it as cheap as he could." On Saturday Pitt went to the King, and told him it would be his interest to restore the great Whig families and persons who had been driven from his Council and service. His opinion was that "the thing would do." Grenville waited for two hours while Pitt was in the closet, and on going in found the King a good deal confused and flustered. "From what I collected," he writes, "the measure is fully taken." On Sunday, Pitt went to see Newcastle at Claremont, and decided to write to Devonshire, Hardwicke, and Rockingham.* The same day Elliott and Jenkinson, two leaders among the King's friends, saw Bute at Kew. "They terrified him so much upon the consequences of the step he had persuaded the King to take, that he determined to depart from it, and to advise his Majesty to send for Mr. Grenville." That evening the King, who was "in the greatest agitation," informed Grenville that Pitt had described the Ministry as a Tory administration, and had insisted upon a change all round. He asked if the terms were not too hard. On Monday, Pitt went again to see the King and had an audience of two hours. The sovereign suggested Lord Northumberland, Bute's son-in-law, for the Treasury, but Pitt objected to this, and also to Lord Halifax.

"'Suppose your Majesty should think fit to give Lord

* His letter to Rockingham states that without Rockingham's support "no system can carry its due weight." *MSS. of Sarah FitzJames*, p. 195. (Hist. MSS. Comm.)

Halifax the paymaster's place?' The King replied, 'But, Mr. Pitt, I had designed that for poor George Grenville; he is your near relation and you once loved him.' To this the only answer was a low bow. And now here comes the bait. 'Why,' says his Majesty, 'should not Lord Temple have the Treasury? You could go on very well then.' 'Sir, the person you shall think to favour with the chief conduct of your affairs cannot possibly go on without a treasury connected with him; but that alone will do nothing. It cannot go on without the great families who have supported the Revolution government, and other great persons of whose abilities and integrity the public have had experience, and who have weight and credit in the nation. I should only deceive your Majesty, if I should leave you in an opinion that I could go on, and your Majesty make a solid administration on any other foot.' 'Well, Mr. Pitt, I see this won't do. My honour is concerned, and I must support it.'" *

After this the King told Grenville that the negotiation was over, but on that very day Bute made other offers to Pitt, which were rejected. Pitt said that he could not tell what changed the tone of the King, but it is clear that the interview of Elliott and Jenkinson with Bute alarmed the favourite, and the alarm spread to the sovereign. Lyttleton, writing to Royston, said: "My old friend was ever a skilful courtier; but since he himself has attained a kind of royalty, he seems more attentive to support his own majesty

* Hardwicke to Royston, *Chatham Correspondence*, ii., 211. *Grenville Papers*, for Grenville's *Diary*, ii., 195.

than to pay the necessary regard to that of his sovereign." That was a very inappropriate criticism of Pitt's conduct towards George III., to whom he behaved with an excess of deference. It was Pitt's loyalty to the Whig families, and his determination to take office only with their concurrence, that excluded him from office. In judgments passed, by Burke among others, on Pitt's relations with the traditional Whigs, his conduct on this occasion is overlooked.

Having failed to detach Pitt from the Whigs, the King regarded Grenville as his one resource, and he attempted to strengthen the administration by taking in the Bedfords. Bedford when first approached advised the King to send for Pitt, being ignorant of the negotiation just ended, but the King informed Bedford that Pitt had stipulated for his exclusion. This was an exaggeration of what Pitt had said,* but it enraged the Duke, who at once agreed to join Grenville. Shelburne, who had arranged the earlier negotiation for Bute, resigned his office, and from this time was the steady ally of Pitt. He wrote to Pitt felicitating him on a negotiation being at an end "which carried through the whole of it such shocking marks of insincerity." Bedford became President of the Council; Sandwich, Secretary of State; Hillsborough, President of the Board of Trade, and Egremont, first Lord of the Admiralty. This proved to be the strongest of the earlier Ministries under George III., and one of the most important.

*See letters of Wood to Pitt, *Chatham Corr.*, ii., 246–252.

When Parliament met the first question raised was that of Wilkes. Grenville moved that No. 45 was a false, scandalous, and seditious libel, tending to excite the people to traitorous insurrections. Pitt agreed in condemning the libel but objected to the words "tending to excite the people to traitorous insurrections." The motion was carried and then Wilkes raised the question of his Parliamentary privilege, which was adjourned. The following day he fought a duel with Martin and was severely wounded. The matter of privilege came before the House on November 23d, when a motion was made "That the privilege of Parliament does not extend to the case of writing and publishing seditious libels, nor ought it to be allowed to obstruct the ordinary course of the laws in the speedy and effectual prosecution of so heinous and dangerous an offence." In principle this resolution was excellent, as there was danger in the formidable array of privileges which the House had from time to time demanded, but it could not be argued that the House had ever before made so considerable a diminution from the cherished safeguards of members. It was obviously proposed, in order to meet the circumstances of the particular cause, to render null and void the defences which Wilkes had pleaded, and was a vindictive motion. Pitt, though very ill, came down to the House on crutches, and opposed the surrender of privilege. He argued that the privilege in question had never been abused, and that it was always in the power of Parliament to give up a member, if complaint was made of him. Parliament had no

right to vote away its privileges, which were the inherent right of succeeding members, as well as of the present. He had joined in condemning the libel, but the rest belonged to the courts of justice.

"He condemned the whole series of *North Britons;* called them illiberal, unmanly, unjust. He abhorred all national reflections. The King's subjects were one people. Whoever divided them was guilty of sedition. His Majesty's complaint was well-founded, it was just, it was necessary. The author did not deserve to be ranked among the human species — he was the blasphemer of his God, and the libeller of his King."

It would have been well if George III. had been content with this generous denunciation, which showed clearly enough that Pitt shared neither the enthusiasm of the mob for Wilkes, nor its prejudice against the Scots. But the political world was eager for the punishment of the King's critic, and Wilkes was expelled from the House, while in the Lords, Sandwich,* appearing for the first time as guardian of morals, brought to the notice of that House an unpublished parody by Wilkes called the *Essay on Woman*, and an address was voted to the King asking that Wilkes might be prosecuted. After Wilkes had escaped to Paris, he was ordered into custody. For some years the patriot was content in exile,

* Sandwich was notoriously profligate and immoral, and had been the associate of Wilkes in the orgies at Medmenham Abbey. *The Beggars' Opera* being performed at Convent Garden soon after this event, the whole audience, when Marshall says "That Jemmy Twitcher should teach me, I own surprises me," burst out into an applause of application; and the nickname of Jemmy Twitcher stuck by the Earl so as almost to occasion the disuse of his title.

living on the bounty of Lord Temple, and an annuity of £1000 contributed by the Whigs.

The debates arising out of Sir W. Meredith's motion condemning general warrants as illegal were very stormy, and threatened to overturn the Ministry. Their majority fell to ten on one division. "Pitt," writes Horace Walpole, "broke out on liberty, and, indeed, on whatever he pleased, uninterrupted. Rigby sat feeling the vice-treasurership slipping from under him. Nugent was not less pensive. Everybody was too much taken up with his own concerns, or too much daunted, to give the least disturbance to the Pindaric." Only one of his many speeches is reported. He admitted he had himself issued general warrants, but he knew they were illegal, and that if he issued them he must risk the consequences. Both cases occurred during the French war. "The real exigency of the case, of the time, and the apparent necessity of the King, would always justify a Secretary of State in every astounding act of power." But in the case of Wilkes there was no necessity for such action; the parties were known.

"What was there in the crime of libel so heinous and terrible, as to require this formidable instrument, which, like an inundation of water, bore down all the barriers and fences of happiness and security? Parliament had voted away its own privilege, and laid the personal freedom of every representative of the nation at the mercy of the Attorney General."

The issue of the moment was the indulgence of a personal resentment against a particular person. "If

the House negatived the motion, they would be the disgrace of the present age and the reproach of posterity; who, after sacrificing their own privileges, had abandoned the liberty of the subject, upon a pretence that was wilfully founded in error, and manifestly urged for the purpose of delusion."

Before the session closed George Grenville brought forward the motion which has given to his name an unhappy prominence in history. In March, 1764, he carried a motion declaring that "for further defraying the expense of protecting the colonies it may be proper to charge certain stamp duties in the said colonies." This resolution, of so momentous import, attracted little attention in England at the time, but it was the basis of a carefully considered policy.

The detailed history of the American Revolution has been written many times; there are many points of view from which it may be studied. Religious, economic, political influences which had long been in operation combined to produce a new State; the foundation of that State is the most remarkable example in history of the practical political reason in operation, and the origins of modern democracy are more clearly written in the deliberate and scientific consultations of the American founders than in the storm and tumult of the French Revolution. The basis of custom and usage was broken up, and government became an affair of reason and speculation. But it is as an event in the history of the British Empire, an event which seemed to close the chapter of colonial power at the moment when that power had

reached its highest pitch, that the biographer of Pitt must regard the great democratic movement. The energies of Pitt's later life were chiefly devoted to the struggle in England which followed American events, and to his mind at least there was a parallel between the resistance of the Americans and the opposition in England to the revival of an arbitrary prerogative. While it cannot be argued that Pitt's political ideas were broad enough completely to comprehend the American case, or that he was in sympathy with the aspirations that were gradually enlarged by the continued struggle, it is yet true that no man in England saw so clearly as he the larger issues of the movement, or sympathised so intensely with the essential spirit of resistance. His patriotism was not insular, but imperial, and the colonial was as truly a fellow-subject as the Englishman at home. He had grasped the moral of the Revolution before the disaster which was necessary to impress it for ever upon the British nation.

The system on which the American colonies were governed was one of political liberty and commercial restriction. There were three classes of colony, the royal, the proprietary, and the charter colony; each of these classes possessed a distinctive constitution, but all three types approximated closely to the general model of the British Parliamentary monarchy. In the royal colonies, Virginia, the Carolinas, New York, New Jersey, and New Hampshire, the governor and his council, which was part of the executive power as well as second chamber of the legislative, were appointed by the Crown, and the Assembly was

elected by the freeholders of the province. The governor and the Crown both possessed a veto on all acts, judges were appointed by the governor and held office during the royal pleasure, while an appeal lay to the King in Council from the local courts. The only proprietary governments were Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Delaware; in these the Crown had little influence, as the proprietors conjointly with the Crown appointed governor and council, and enacted laws with the advice of the elected Assemblies. In Maryland the Crown could not invalidate the laws unless they were repugnant to those of England, and a perpetual export duty on tobacco provided sufficient revenue without grants from the Assembly. In Pennsylvania the Assembly enjoyed greater power, as the governor and judges were dependent upon it for their annual support. It was in Massachusetts that the most democratic constitution obtained; by the charter granted in 1691 the governor was appointed by the Crown, but the Assembly, which met each year, elected the twenty-eight members of the council, though the governor could veto any name; laws made by the General Court, consisting of the Assembly and council, were subject to the governor's veto and might be disallowed by the King within three years of their enactment. The governor and council appointed judges, and the Assembly voted all supplies. Town matters were governed by town meetings of all freemen within the parish, which were an important and most influential institution; "all New England was an aggregate of organised democracies." Connecticut and Rhode

Island were even more democratic in organisation, though not in spirit, than Massachusetts, and these northern colonies were the mainstay of the Revolution. Such had been the general political system for the greater part of American history; its working displayed the dangerous weakness of the executive power, and the ability of the Assemblies not to govern, but to paralyse government. The governor was responsible to the Crown and dependent on the Assembly; because he was not the man of their own choice, and not responsible to them, his every act was scrutinised with a greater jealousy by the elected representatives who controlled the purse. The claim to vote supplies led to the larger claim to appropriate supplies, exactly as it had done in English Parliamentary history; if the colonial Assembly, like the English Parliament, could have delegated its supreme control to a ministerial executive, a firmly adjusted constitution might have been secured. But that meant that the executive would be not the servant of the Crown, but the choice of the colony: it meant that the Assembly, in the words of Governor Pownall, would assume "the actual executive part of the Government, than which nothing is more clearly and unquestionably settled in the Crown."* A representative body that controls the public revenue is certain to absorb sovereign power; but when the charters of the colonists granted to the American this familiar English safeguard, such a consequence was not understood or intended, and as a result there were constant quarrels between the

* *Administration of the Colonies.*

executive, which represented the English idea of colonial subordination, and the Assembly, which represented the actual fact of colonial self-government. This was particularly the case in Massachusetts, where many disputes with a succession of governors and many victories won by the withholding of money had pointed and emphasised the essential importance of representative control over the public revenue. When that position was threatened every man in New England saw the value of the issue as clearly as Hampden had seen it in that historic struggle out of which New England itself had sprung.

In commercial affairs and questions of general policy the colonies were subordinate to the Crown and to the Parliament of Great Britain, which was recognised as the superintending body. The English common law and statutes which mentioned the plantations were everywhere recognised as binding, and any colonial law repugnant to such statutes was null and void.* Matters affecting the colonies generally, such as the law of naturalisation, the currency, the postal system, were expressly regulated by Parliament, and appeals were made to the Crown for protection against religious or class oppression. It was, however, in the laws of trade that Parliamentary control made itself felt. The commercial system was that which had commended itself to the statesmen of every European country that possessed plantations, a system founded on monopoly, prohibitive tariffs, bounties, and all those devices of pro-

*7 and 8 Will. III., c. 22.

tectionism which the enlightened intelligence of the nineteenth century regards with disdain. In its main object the system, which aimed at power, was completely successful; it was adopted in order to encourage the shipping trade of England, and without doubt that object was achieved largely as a result of its provisions. By his Navigation Ordinance of 1651 Cromwell decreed that no goods should be exported from or imported into England except in English or colonial built ships, which must belong to English owners and be manned by a crew three quarters English. By the Act of 1660 this was reasserted, and it was further ordained that certain enumerated articles should not be exported from any colony to any country except Great Britain or another British colony; and in 1664 and 1672 it was further enacted that European goods must be landed in Great Britain before being shipped to the colonies, and that goods exported from one colony to another should be liable to the same duty as if exported to England. So far as the compulsory use of English ships was concerned the colonists were on a level with Englishmen, and found no great reason to complain; they were amply compensated by the resulting strength of the English navy, which protected their commerce and had delivered them from French rivalry. The other side of the commercial policy in some respects hazarded their interests; so far as the enumerated articles were concerned they were rigidly confined to the British market, but some of their most important productions, such as grain, lumber, salted provisions, fish,

sugar, and rum, were not enumerated, and these might be exported directly to other colonies. "If the whole surplus produce of America had been put into the enumeration, and thereby forced into the market of Great Britain, it would have interfered too much with the produce of the industry of our own people," writes Adam Smith. A great market was secured for certain American goods, such as sugar, tobacco, unwrought iron, by their exemption from part of the duty levied on the same goods from foreign countries, and a system of drawbacks remitting part of the export duties on foreign goods shipped to England in transit for America made some articles actually cheaper in the colonies than in England. On the other hand, while bounties were given on English necessaries, such as naval stores sent to the mother country, any manufacture or trade that would compete with an English industry was suppressed by law. Thus, to take a remarkable instance quoted by Bancroft, the Bible was not allowed to be printed by any colonial press. The most important of the commercial restrictions in its immediate effects was the prohibitive duty on the importation into New England of molasses from the French West Indian islands. New England found a market for its timber in these islands, and the French needed a market for their molasses, which were excluded from France, while New England's great export was rum. The duty was systematically evaded, with the tacit consent of the customs officers. A great illicit trade sprang up in this connection, and even during the war, greatly to Pitt's

indignation,* the trading zeal of the colonists led them to export commodities to the French. This contraband trade attracted the attention of Grenville; the attempt to suppress it displayed to the colonists the disadvantages of the mercantile system.

The great critic of this system, Adam Smith, in summing up his considerations upon it, remarks that Great Britain treated the colonists with greater liberality than any foreign Power, but astutely adds that this did not arise altogether from disinterestedness. "To found a great empire for the sole purpose of raising up a people of customers, may at first sight appear a project fit for a nation of shopkeepers." The traders of England wished that "the cultivators of America might be confined to their shop: first for buying all the goods which they wanted for Europe; secondly, for selling all such parts of their own produce as such traders might find it convenient to buy — for they did not find it convenient to buy every part of it. Some parts of it imported into England might have interfered with some of the trades which they themselves carried on at home. Those particular parts of it, therefore, they were willing that the colonists should sell where they could, the further off the better; and upon that account proposed that their market should be confined to the countries south of Cape Finisterre. A clause in the famous Act of Navigation established this truly shopkeeper proposal into

*See his "Letter to Governors of America," Thackeray's *Life of Chatham*, ii., 475.

a law. The maintenance of this monopoly has hitherto been the principal, or more properly perhaps the sole, end and purpose of the dominion which Great Britain assumes over the colonies. . . . The monopoly is the sole badge of their dependency, and it is the sole fruit which has hitherto been gathered from that dependency." These words exhibit the spirit of that colonial system which was tried and found wanting in the early years of George III.; they contain also a warning that is eternally applicable to those who are members of a great commercial empire.

The policy with which Grenville was identified, but which was undoubtedly not originated by him, was no opportunist scheme hastily adopted, but the logical outcome of the ideas on which the old colonial system was based. He had inherited the vast debt increased to more than one hundred and fifty millions by the late war; the bent of his mind was towards economy and urgent considerations compelled him to seek fresh sources of income; he had inherited also the duty of securing the defence of Canada against all possible attacks, and of guarding the civilisation of America from the peril of Indian warfare. Examining the revenue from American customs he found that a receipt varying between one and two thousand pounds cost from seven to eight thousand to collect, while his consideration of the problem of American defence led him to conclude that an army of twenty thousand men must be maintained in the colonies. This was as large a force as had been maintained in Great Britain on the

peace establishment, and its cost amounted to a considerable sum. The policy he adopted was rigidly to enforce the trade laws, to establish an army of twenty thousand in America, and to raise an American revenue by means of stamps affixed to all legal documents, which should be spent entirely in support of the army in America. So far as the first two articles were concerned Grenville was only executing the ideas of his generation, though the methods he adopted bore the impress of his narrow and somewhat pedantic mind, and of that strain of tyranny which was part of his character. In enforcing the trade laws he was in reality aiming a severe blow at American prosperity, especially in New England, and a wise statesman would have been specially careful to adopt means as little irritating as possible; Grenville, however, when once satisfied that his purpose was a righteous one paid little attention to method. He enlarged the jurisdiction of the Admiralty Courts, which sat without a jury, though trial by jury was universal in the colonies; he gave to revenue officers a general power of search by writs of assistance, which were analogous to the general warrants of England, and he transformed the naval officers stationed on the American coast into revenue officials, administering to them the customs house oath, and encouraging their assiduity by the prospect of large rewards for the discovery of smuggling. It is clear that measures such as these bore all the appearance of tyranny.

The first note of resistance was heard in the speech of Otis, in February, 1761, against the practice of

issuing writs of assistance to the customs officers. The writs were clearly legal, but it is worth noting that Otis, and that other lawyer patriot Henry, who had such a great influence over popular opinion, never hesitated to lay greater stress on the broad moral aspect of their cases than on any technical legal ground. Otis, for example, in his speech against the writs of assistance stood upon the maxim, "No Act of Parliament can establish such a writ; even though made in the very language of the petition, it would be a nullity. . . . An Act of Parliament against the constitution is void." He appealed to universal principles, founded in truth, and said that the writs, though based on statutes, were contrary to "reason." Those words are said to have produced a lasting impression, but the argument is one which no law court could accept, seeing that it is addressed not to the interpretation but to the moral character of the statutes concerned.* It is a salient characteristic of the manner in which the policy of Grenville was approached by the Americans that they regarded the technical aspect as subordinate, and went directly to the root principles of government involved.

While there is no doubt that the strict enforcement of the trade laws was more damaging to the monetary interests of the Americans, it was the novel plan of Grenville embodied in the Stamp Act

* Adams said Otis was Isaiah and Ezekiel in one. "Then and there was the first scene of the first act of opposition to the arbitrary claims of Great Britain." Tyler, *Literary History of the American Revolution*, i., 36.

that first moved the colonists to united resistance. In regard to this measure the Minister showed considerable anxiety to consult the wishes of the colonists, and he gave them a year in which to consider its details, or to suggest some other method of raising the money. He met the agents of the colonies, and expressed his desire if possible to act in accordance with their wishes, but he never wavered as to the necessity of a contribution from America, or as to the right of the Imperial Parliament to levy a tax. When Franklin suggested that the old method of a requisition upon the Assemblies through the governors had answered well in the past, Grenville asked him whether the colonies could agree on the respective proportions they should contribute. Franklin was too familiar with the constant disputes between the colonies on this very matter to answer that they could, but it is none the less a remarkable fact that Grenville should not even have tested this method of raising the revenue, which he intended to devote entirely to American objects. In introducing the resolution (February 6, 1765) he argued that the colonies had a right to protection, that protection meant an army, and that it was reasonable for the colonies to raise one-third of the amount required for this army. He estimated that the Stamp Act would produce £100,000. The debt of Great Britain was one hundred and fifty millions, that of the colonies eight hundred thousand, while the cost of their government was only seventy-five thousand a year. The remonstrances of the Americans, he asserted, failed in the great point of the colonies not being represented

in Parliament, which was the great council of the Empire, and as capable of imposing internal taxes as navigation laws. Their charters could not override Parliament; it was not within the prerogative to emancipate English subjects from the dominion of Parliament.

The Commons were impressed by these arguments, knowing as they did the heavy burden of taxation in Great Britain. The only opposition came from Conway and from Barré, the latter of whom, in his "Sons of Liberty" speech, realised very acutely the spirit in which the Americans resisted the act. There was force in the contention that the colonists had profited greatly by the war, and ought to share in the expenses it entailed, although that contention was exaggerated when it was urged that the war had been undertaken entirely on behalf of the colonies. The war had been far more a British than an American concern, and British statesmen would never have undertaken such an enterprise simply on account of colonial interests; in previous policy, at the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle for example, colonial interests were strictly subordinated to those of the mother country. Pitt's speech on the peace clearly showed that the war had opened up the prospect of great mercantile advantages. Moreover, the colonies had themselves rendered great services. They had put twenty thousand men into the field, and were by no means recouped for their outlay in money by the sums granted them from the British exchequer. Pennsylvania, according to Franklin, spent half a million and received

back only sixty thousand pounds.* He asserted also that the colonists could not pay the stamp duty for want of gold and silver, and the Pennsylvanians were obliged to tax themselves heavily. Yet he said they would willingly give money for the objects of the act if they were asked to make a free grant. But Grenville was wedded to the principle of Parliamentary taxation, which was more to him even than the increase of revenue, as is shown by his curious offer of bounties as offsets against the new tax. "If one bounty will not do, I will add two, if two will not do, I will add three."† This offer breaks down the logic of his plan, and deprives him of that reputation for economy which was his chief pride. Bounties given on so lavish a scale would soon diminish the hundred thousand pounds, which was the anticipated market value of the Stamp Act; and while bounties could only satisfy those concerned in particular trades, the new duty affected the whole population, so that there would have been constant demands for more bounties. Dr. Johnson, deprecating too low an estimate of Grenville's nature, said that if he could have obtained payment of the Manilla ransom from Spain he would have been able to count it. Possibly the Minister realised that the experiment of bribing the colonists to pay a small tax would not prove a lucrative one for the national finances, but he had pledged his word, his obstinate nature was committed to that view of the

* Examination before the House of Commons. *Works* (Jared Sparks) iv., 161, 198.

† *Cavendish Debates*, i., 404.

question, as one of "obedience to the laws, and respect for the legislative authority of the kingdom," which was expressed in the King's speech of 1765. Whether or not the Treasury was to be enriched, he had pitted the Parliament of Great Britain against those Assemblies which were her children.

For twelve months after the struggle over Wilkes, Pitt was almost retired from political life. He received two legacies during the year, one of £1000 from Mr. Allen of Bath, and another one from Sir William Pynsent, who bequeathed an estate in Somersetshire of nearly £3000 a year, which offered him enough land for his favourite pleasure of landscape gardening. The death of the Duke of Devonshire and the great age of Newcastle made Lord Rockingham leader of the Whigs. Pitt, in October, 1764, wrote a kind of manifesto to Newcastle in which he declared that "he would not quit the free condition of a man standing *single*, and daring to appeal to his country at large, upon the soundness of his principles and the rectitude of his conduct." Notwithstanding this declaration the Whigs still looked to Pitt as one who would consolidate a Ministry of their own connection. The Duke of Grafton writes in his journal, "The Opposition had so little expectation of being called to take a part in Administration, unless by the recommendation of Mr. Pitt, that even when the coldness between the King and his servants was apparent to all mankind, to act under Mr. Pitt became the general voice, and was our principal wish."* The spring of 1765, when this was

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 32.

written by Grafton, again brought political dissensions, the occasion being the first illness of George III. This necessitated a Regency Bill; Grenville and Bedford were by this time bitterly hostile to anything that savoured of Bute's influence, and they extracted from the King an agreement that the name of his mother, the Princess Dowager, should be excluded from the Council of Regency. By an amendment carried against Grenville by the Tories and King's friends, it was decided to insert the name. The incident caused the greatest pain to the King and abruptly ended all relations of confidence with his Ministers. He turned to the Duke of Cumberland, whom he had frequently slighted, and besought him to find a Ministry. The Duke began negotiations in May, 1765.

Pitt was interviewed by Lord Albemarle and by Cumberland himself, and subject to certain stipulations as to policy, the most important of which were the establishment of a counter-system to the House of Bourbon, the restoration of officers who had been dismissed for their votes in Parliament, and preferment in the services on merit, he was personally willing to serve. Temple, however, made objections. Grenville and Bedford, finding that the negotiation was unsuccessful, determined to read the King a lesson and punish the adherents of Bute. Their behaviour to the King was hectoring, dictatorial, and discourteous. Another attempt was made by the King to engage Pitt and he declared he was ready to go to St. Janes's "if he might carry the Constitution with him." In his interview with the King Pitt

A. Walker, sculp.

EARL TEMPLE.

condemned the Stamp Act.* But again Temple stepped in, and declined the Treasury. Pitt reluctantly gave up the idea of returning to office and quoted to Temple

> "Exstinxti me teque, soror, populumque patresque Sidonios, urbemque tuam."

It is difficult to divine Temple's reasons for this perverse conduct, which deprived England of a Ministry that might have avoided the great disaster impending; probably his recent reconciliation with George Grenville was the origin of a foolish ambition he cherished of making with his brother and Pitt a triumvirate that should govern the Empire. There can be no doubt that Pitt was anxious to take office. Cumberland wrote to Albemarle: "I found the King already entrenching himself behind Pitt's promises of mercy in so many particulars. By what I can pick up, Pitt is completely mortified, and I am heartily sorry for it, as he had entered more sincerely into the King's service, nay, and went further almost than the King's views."† Probably Temple desired to inflict condign punishment on the entire party of Bute. He described the plan of the proposed administration as Butal Ducal.

The King at length found deliverance from Grenville by taking in the Whigs; Lord Rockingham took the Treasury; Conway was leader of the Commons, and Secretary of State with the Duke of

* *Grenville Papers*, iii., 203.

† *Rockingham Memoirs*, i., 213, 241. See also Cumberland's report on the negotiations, *ibid.*, i., 185–203, and *Grenville Papers*, iii., 61.

Grafton as colleague, Dowdeswell Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the old Duke of Newcastle Privy Seal. Chesterfield described the new Ministry as an arch of which Pitt was the key-stone. Lyttleton wrote to his brother:

"Mr. Pitt is convinced that if Lord Temple had accepted, the Ministry formed by and under them would have had nothing to fear from Lord Bute; that the King relished the measures, both foreign and domestic, which he had prepared; and that he can never hereafter come in so agreeably to himself or so usefully to the publick, the time being critical with respect to foreign affairs. Nor do I think he will ever co-operate with Lord Temple in any measure of opposition taken by his Lordship, in conjunction with his brother and the Duke of Bedford, or accede to them as a Ministry, though he is reconciled to George Grenville as a relation. . . . The desire of Mr. Pitt in the publick is inexpressibly strong, and nothing will satisfy them without him. I believe he is also much desired in the Court." *

Temple, on the other hand, plainly declared his own disapproval of the new Government, and intimated that Pitt shared his feeling. "Mr. Pitt neither had, nor would have, any the least share in the formation of it, as it now stands; he is retired into Somersetshire, and has not, I dare say, any the smallest communication with them" † (September 5, 1765). Charles Townshend said it was a lute-string administration, fit only for summer wear.

* Phillimore's *Lyttleton*, July 25, 1765.

† *Grenville Papers*, iii., 85.

CHAPTER VI.

REPEAL OF THE STAMP ACT.

1766.

THE Rockingham party will be always memorable because its leader was the patron of Edmund Burke, the most profoundly influential of English political thinkers, who, in 1765, at the age of thirty-six, was returned to Parliament as member for Wendover. Dr. Johnson declared that he had only known two men who had risen very considerably above the common level, Lord Chatham and Edmund Burke. Although Burke was a poor man and unconnected, from the first his influence over the passive and unoriginal intellect of Rockingham was commanding and decisive. How far Burke's ideas on the subject of party were coloured by the special circumstances of the Rockingham connection, or how far the policy of the party was the fruit of Burke's ideas, it is not easy to say. But Burke was their great protagonist and originator; his eloquence and fame have shed glory upon their commonplace personalities. The antagonism between Pitt and this section of the Whigs, which was

never wholly subdued, was the result mainly of Pitt's idiosyncrasies, but it was stimulated and embittered from the other side by Burke's dislike for Pitt, by his distrust of Pitt's popular tendencies, his prejudice against a man who would not bow the knee to the prevailing deity of the Whigs, but acted with confidence in himself and an arrogant disregard of great connections. Burke's belief in party government has been substantiated by the history of politics since the great democratic revolution which Burke feared so greatly, but in the eighteenth century it was only dimly realised. Rockingham was a typical Whig, and his small party represented all that remained of the great majority which Newcastle had consolidated and Pitt had borrowed. They had passed unscathed through the hard ordeal of Fox's systematic corruption, and deserved the highest credit for their resistance to that Minister. They still preserved the old Whig faith in government by the House of Commons, though they never had a majority of their own. The great principles of uniform policy in the Council, and uniform action under one leader, which Burke ascribed to them in later years, may have reposed in the bosom of Rockingham, but they were from the first disregarded by his colleagues. The new Premier was a man of good sense and genuine character, but he was lacking in experience and in training; destitute of all greater qualifications for statesmanship, with no superior knowledge and no remarkable strength of will, he failed to impress Parliament, or his colleagues, or the nation, with any belief in his value, any desire for

LORD ROCKINGHAM.

FROM THE PAINTING BY B. WILSON.

his return. He owed his position to his great territorial possessions, and up to the time when he became Premier had held no responsible office of state, though as Lord Lieutenant he had been distinguished by dismissal, at the same time as Devonshire and Newcastle. It was only after long resistance that he yielded to the pressure of his friends and took the Treasury. It is difficult to share in the enthusiasm of Burke for this blameless but uninspiring chief, and the regard of his contemporaries never passed beyond the esteem which is felt for all those who do their duty in that station to which it has pleased God to call them.

Rockingham's chief colleagues were Conway and Grafton. Conway had served with distinction, and very conspicuous bravery, under Prince Ferdinand. Horace Walpole cherished for him a warm and constant affection, and has portrayed his character in the most attractive light. His speeches were ready and graceful, delivered with much charm of manner, and spiced with considerable wit; his honesty was undoubted, his incorruptibility proverbial, his intentions excellent. But of initiative in political action he had none, and too often, even in the pages of his admirer, he presents the confusing spectacle of a politician not knowing his own mind. An admirable lieutenant, he needed a leader. The other Secretary of State was the Duke of Grafton, who at this time was barely thirty years of age. Like the Duke of Richmond and Fox, he was descended from Charles II. His estate, inherited at an early age, combined with unusual ability, made him prominent long

before his character was matured, but he was never anxious for office, and preferred fox-hunting to politics. He was an accomplished speaker and in easier times might have made a successful Minister. He warmly admired the character of Pitt, who had noticed him when a boy at Eton, and Pitt appreciated the admiration and friendship of the young Duke. From the moment of accepting office Grafton made no secret of his preference for Pitt. He himself writes:

"Despairing of receiving Mr. Pitt's assistance at our head, a new plan for establishing a Ministry was proposed—several, with myself, understanding that it came forward with a full declaration of our desire to receive Mr. Pitt at our head, whenever he should see the situation of affairs to be such as to allow him to take that part. My concern afterwards was great, when I found, before the conclusion of our first session, that this idea was already vanished from the minds of some of my colleagues. I always understood this to be the ground on which I engaged, and it will be seen that I adhered to my own resolution to the last." *

Prominent among the supporters of Rockingham, in the House of Commons, were Sir George Saville, a man of great influence with his leader, of strong convictions and great constitutional knowledge, and Dowdeswell, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Charles Townshend still retained the Paymastership, but did not profess any attachment to his colleagues, while Lord Barrington, the Secretary of War, and Northington, the Lord Chancellor, were

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 54.

avowedly servants of the King and in no sense followers of the Prime Minister.

The fate of the Ministry depended on the favour of the King or the support of Pitt. The sovereign had accepted Rockingham as a last resort against George Grenville; he preferred the Whigs with Pitt to the Whigs without him, because he believed Pitt's peculiar ideas on the subject of party would make a Ministry under him amenable to royal influence: but now he had been compelled to accept the party he had intended to exclude from office during his reign. Moreover, Rockingham and Conway were personally distasteful, both having suffered official deprivation for their independence; Chief Justice Pratt, the fearless judge who had asserted the illegality of general warrants, had been, by compulsion of the Ministers, raised to the peerage as Lord Camden; and on the most important question of the day, the Stamp Act, Rockingham was for repeal, while the King believed in the act. With such grounds of royal disfavour, and with the controlling majority in Parliament under the sovereign's direction, Rockingham could not anticipate a long tenure of office. But the unique fame, the wide popular favour of Pitt might have outbalanced the weight of the King's displeasure, and from the beginning the support of Pitt was solicited. It is clear that Pitt always distrusted the Ministry, and it is somewhat curious that the cause of his distrust was his old quarrel with the Duke of Newcastle. At the great dinner of the leading men at which the distribution of offices was arranged, there

was much difficulty in persuading Rockingham to take the Treasury, and Grafton states that Newcastle gave up his claims to leadership reluctantly. Pitt imagined that the former chieftain was to be the guiding spirit, and there are some evidences of activity on Newcastle's part which may have strengthened this suspicion. On several occasions before Parliament met Pitt's opinion on the Ministry was asked. To Grafton on the 24th of August he wrote: "I have constantly averred that this Ministry was not formed by my advice, but by the counsel of others; that, from experience of different ways of thinking and of acting, Claremont * could not be to me an object of confidence or expectation of a solid system for the public good according to my notions of it." † To Thomas Walpole, to whom he had just sold Hayes, he said: "All I can say is this, that I move in the sphere only of measures. Quarrels at Court, or family reconciliations, shall never vary my fixed judgment of things. Those who, with me, have stood by the cause of liberty, and the national honour, upon true Revolution principles, will never find me against them, till they fall and do not act up to those principles." ‡ To George Cooke he remarked that he had finally resolved never to be in confidence or concert again with Newcastle. In yet another letter Pitt wails in his favourite minor key:

"The world now is fallen into the Duke of Newcastle's hands; the country is undone; and I am of

* Newcastle. † *Chatham Corr.*, ii., 321–322. ‡ *Ibid.*, ii., 329.

opinion, that no solid system for giving it but a chance for any tolerable degree of safety can be possible under his Grace's auspices, and where his influence colours and warps the whole." *

All this is somewhat melancholy reading. Dread of Newcastle obscured Pitt's mind, and it was a singularly inadequate motive to govern such a man at such a crisis. Can Pitt have forgotten how he had ruled Newcastle himself? Even if Newcastle had been chief Minister, Pitt's would have been incomparably the strongest influence at Council and in Parliament, and with Rockingham as nominal chief, a man who would have resigned office without hesitation rather than countenance for a moment the usurped authority of Bute, there was little fear that the Ministry would have been dragged at the heels of the Court. The administration was open to the objection, as Pitt conceived it to be, of being founded on too narrow a bottom, and on one connection, and the ideal of a Ministry of all the talents and representing all sections was a noble if impracticable one; but the accession of Pitt would have widened its foundations, he would have received the ready support of the ablest men in its ranks, and could have exercised practical control over its policy. But Pitt seems to have imbibed the malignant suspicions of Temple, and his will was fixed not to join the administration.

It is a relief to turn from the personal antipathies which separated Rockingham and Pitt to the great

* *Chatham Correspondence*, ii., 345.

question of public policy on which they were united. The Ministry is remembered as that which repealed the Stamp Act of Grenville and averted for a time the danger of schism in Greater Britain. It is America that gives unity to Pitt's career; it was his war policy which drove the French from Canada, which increased the debt of Great Britain, and made new sources of revenue necessary; he had inspired in the colonies a lofty spirit, he had emancipated them from that fear of the French which made them lean on British protection, he had breathed into them the consciousness of organic unity. Having been chief agent in this work of consolidation, it was his fate to live through the years of dismemberment and disintegration, to watch the tragedy of estrangement proceed towards its relentless end. The series of events which led to the establishment of the United States is not indeed part of the biography of Pitt, as is the war which he conducted, but none the less it must be fully understood if a proper estimate of Pitt is to be made. We have seen him in the height of his power, acting with unimpeded freedom, a maker of history; except for one brief space, we shall for the future see him hampered and almost powerless, the man of action transformed into the critic and prophet. If in the first period he made an Empire, in the second he struggled to avert an Empire's dissolution. It is this double aspect of his career as an imperial statesman which has given to his life a two-fold value in the study of imperial politics.

Events in America, after the news that Grenville's

policy had been adopted by Parliament arrived, were an anticipation of what might occur if more serious resistance became necessary. The presses were flooded with pamphlets arguing the question, and these, with the fragments of speeches, exhibit the spiritual origins of that passionate love of sober freedom which was the noblest element in the American Revolution, as indeed it is the highest quality of English political history. Every Spaniard who sailed for America, said Adam Smith, hoped to find an El Dorado, but the emigration to New England had been an "exodus," not a search for gold but a change of country for the sake of religious freedom. "Religion is the great state-building principle; these colonists could found a new State because they were already a Church."* That influence of a long training in the religious freedom of the Independent Church in New England, of the Society of Friends in Pennsylvania, of the Presbyterian Church in parts of Virginia is writ large in the pamphlets of the time. It had encouraged the speculative intelligence, which was now turned keenly upon the very foundations of authority. The arguments used were largely those of the great Whig philosopher, Locke, and a theory which based society upon a compact between governor and governed supplied arguments in plenty against unlimited submission. It is interesting to observe how quotations from the Bible and from Locke mingle with passages from the classic writers, with heroic examples from what Pitt called the apostolic age of patriotism, the days of Scipio,

* *Expansion of England*, p. 154.

or from the England of the Stuart period. Patrick Henry warned George III. that Tarquin and Cæsar had each his Brutus, that Charles had his Cromwell. Jonathan Mayhew, the great Puritan preacher, told his congregation that he had drawn his ideas on civil liberty "from Plato, Demosthenes, Cicero, and other renowned persons among the ancients; from Sidney, Milton, Locke, and Hoadly, among the moderns; that he had learnt from the Holy Scriptures that wise, virtuous, and brave men were always friends to liberty." * A principal difference between the French and American revolutions is that the former was an uprising against wrong and oppression, whereas in the latter men who worshipped freedom as a spiritual possession scented tyranny from afar, and were urged into resistance not by oppression but by the fear of oppression.

Sentiment and enthusiasm played a great part, but a victorious common sense reigned over both. It was at once perceived that union among the colonies was the true source of strength; "There ought to be no New Englandman, no New Yorker, known on the continent, but all of us Americans." Franklin in his Canada pamphlet had told the English that union among the colonies was not merely improbable, but impossible, unless, he added, by the most grievous tyranny and oppression.† He himself had experienced the difficulties attending the most elementary union in 1754, but the Stamp Act was a great unifying influence, and a Congress, in which nine colonies were represented, assembled at New

* Tyler, *op. cit.*, i., 132. † *Works*, iv., 42.

York in October, 1765. "Those who compose it," wrote Gage to Secretary Conway, "are of various characters and opinions, but in general the spirit of democracy is strong among them, supporting the independence of the provinces as not subject to the legislative power of Great Britain. The question is not of the expediency of the Stamp Act, but that it is unconstitutional and contrary to their rights." Very cautious resolutions were passed with practical unanimity by the Congress, which drew up fourteen declaratory resolutions of right, and petitions to the King and each House of Parliament. These dwell on the right of trial by jury in opposition to the Admiralty court, complain of the late restrictions of trade, acknowledge all due subordination to the Parliament, but assert that the people of the colonies, who are entitled to all the rights of natural-born subjects, are not, and from local circumstances never can be, represented by the House of Commons. "It is inseparably essential to the freedom of a people, and the undoubted right of Englishmen, that no taxes be imposed on them but with their own consent given personally or by their representatives." Such was the constitutional ground taken. Other measures of a practical kind were adopted, by common consent, with no need of legal sanction. The merchants agreed to send no more orders to Great Britain for goods, and suspended payment of their debts to merchants in the mother country, until the Stamp Act should be repealed. The stamps were boycotted: all legal business was at a standstill until the royal governors were

compelled to issue letters authorising for a time non-compliance with the act. The Stamp Act was hawked about the streets as Britain's Folly and America's Ruin. The riots and disorders which are an inevitable accompaniment of all great popular ferments broke out at Boston, where the Admiralty court was burned and Hutchinson's house was broken into by the mob. It is an evil side of this great agitation for liberty that such conduct was allowed to go unpunished, though it was totally inconsistent with the constitutional appeal to the King and Parliament which the Congress had initiated.

The colonists had stated their case in calm and dignified language, which insisted on their rights as free citizens of the Empire, but at the same time acknowledged the obligations of loyalty and their affection for Great Britain, and they had launched a series of retaliatory commercial measures. The latter quickly produced an effect on English public opinion. The traders of London, Bristol, and Liverpool sent petitions to Parliament stating that the colonists owed several millions for goods supplied; that they had hitherto paid their debts punctually, but now declared that they could not do so. Maryland and Virginia owed half a million to Glasgow alone, and in Manchester, Nottingham, and Leeds, thousands of men were thrown out of employment by the cessation of American orders.* A great impression had thus been made on those mercantile classes upon whose special knowledge politicians had always relied for guidance in their colonial policy. In

* Lecky, *History of England*, iii., 333.

strictly political circles in England, few men realised the importance of the Stamp Act, and during the negotiations which led to the Rockingham Ministry, the only reference made to the subject was Pitt's repudiation of the scheme in his audience with the King.* The new administration, in which Burke saw the beginning of uniform party conviction, was divided on the question.

The Duke of Cumberland would have favoured enforcement of the act, and after his death, Northington, Yorke, Barrington, were all in favour of the principle. Rockingham himself wished for repeal in order to avoid the confusion that must follow coercion; Conway and Grafton agreed. The King believed in the right to tax, and preferred modification to repeal, but, he said, repeal is better than enforcement by the sword. When Parliament met in December, affairs in America were referred to as "matters of importance," but no policy was foreshadowed in the King's speech. Angry debates occurred in both Houses, in which the Bedford party, Mansfield, Grenville, and Charles Townshend

* Mr. Lecky points out the very remarkable fact that in his discussion with Cumberland, Pitt traversed the whole situation, but said nothing of America. "There is not the smallest evidence that either Pitt or Cumberland, or any of the other statesmen who were concerned in the negotiation, were conscious that any serious question was impending in America." This is true as to the May negotiations, but needs supplementing by Pitt's remarks to the King in June. Grenville says that Pitt's blame of the Stamp Act was among the "fundamentals" he laid down to the King. (June 26, 1765. *Grenville Papers*, iii., 203). Shelburne and Pitt "strongly commended Barré's conduct" in opposing the act. *Life of Shelburne*, i., 322, 323.

were conspicuous by their demand that British authority should be maintained. The Ministers did not state any policy, and it is noteworthy that those who spoke for the colonies were Shelburne, who had visited Pitt on his way to town, and Cooke and Beckford, who were on intimate terms with Pitt. During the Christmas recess a meeting of Ministers was held, but they could agree on no consistent plan of operations, and decided upon a King's speech that should recommend the subject in general terms to the wisdom of Parliament.* It is clear that when Pitt came to London in January the question of repeal was an open one.

What was the exact relation of Pitt to Ministers? That was the problem which exercised politicians. The debates of December had exhibited the strength of opposition and the strong prejudice against the colonists existing in both Houses. Rockingham offered Shelburne a high position after the latter's strong speech against the Stamp Act, but the only reply he received was that Shelburne believed that without Mr. Pitt no durable and respectable system could be formed. Writing to his chief, Shelburne says that he is astonished at the infatuation of Ministers in being "persuaded, as they appear to be, of the confidence of the Court." "Only Pitt can put an end to the condition of anarchy existing." "Lord Rockingham expressed himself certain of Mr. Pitt's good wishes, and that they were ready to be disposed of as he pleased."† Pitt in reply again re-

* Adolphus, *Hist. of George III.*, i., 198 (1848).

† *Chatham Correspondence*, i., 353.

ferred to Newcastle's influence. Within the Ministry, Grafton particularly desired an immediate resort to Pitt, and when the latter arrived in town negotiations were opened. Thomas Townshend, a leader among the country gentlemen, had visited Pitt at Bath to ask his advice and to say that the Ministers desired much to have him at their head. Pitt's answer was somewhat cold, but Grafton recommended that Pitt should be invited to see the King and give his advice on the American matter. "I presumed to recommend this step to his Majesty, who had no objection to it, until he had seen Lord Rockingham."* On January 6th, the King, presumably after this interview with the chief Minister, sent Rockingham his formal decision "that so loose a conversation as that of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Townshend is not sufficient to risk either my dignity or the continuance of my administration, by a fresh treaty with that gentleman. . . . I shall therefore, undoubtedly, to-morrow decline authorising the Duke of Grafton to say anything to Mr. Pitt."† So matters stood when Parliament met again on January 14, 1766.

Pitt had not been in the House for twelve months, but during those twelve months had been constantly solicited to take office, both by the sovereign and by the Whigs. At this moment he was arbiter of the ministerial policy and the ministerial fate, and a crowded House waited anxiously for the words that

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 63. Sir W. Anson's notes elucidate this transaction.

† *Rockingham Memoirs*, i., 266.

should dispel doubt and rumour, and prove whether Pitt had joined in Lord Temple's political reconciliation with George Grenville or intended to assist repeal. The royal speech informed Parliament that matters of importance had happened in America, and orders had been issued for the support of lawful authority. Whatever remained to be done, he committed to their wisdom. The debate which followed made this one of the greatest occasions in the history of the House of Commons; the question debated was momentous for the nation, for the empire, and for mankind; the argument resolved itself into a duel between the two chief members of the assembly, men who had been friends in youth, but now

> "They stood aloof, the scars remaining,
> Like cliffs which had been rent asunder."

The pedantic and pedestrian mind of the one contrasted with the rapid imagination of the other; Grenville's technical accuracy and careful logic dissected the lofty declamations of Pitt; it was a combat between the mechanical forces of talent and the irresistible energy of genius.

Pitt spoke early in the debate, and began with a brief dissertation upon parties.* "I stand up in this place, single and unconnected. As to the late Ministry," turning to Grenville, who sat within one of him, "every capital measure they have taken is entirely wrong. To the present gentlemen, to those

* The fullest report is in Bancroft. A French précis, which Bancroft consulted contains several additions to the accepted English version, which was reported by Sir Robert Head.

at least whom I have in my eye" (looking at Conway), "I have no objection; I have not been made a sacrifice by any of them. Their characters are fair, and I am always glad when men of fair characters engage in his Majesty's service. Some of them have done me the honour to ask my opinion before they would engage. They will do me the justice to own, I advised them to engage; but, notwithstanding,— I love to be explicit,— I cannot give them my confidence: pardon me, gentlemen, confidence is a plant of slow growth in an aged bosom; youth is the season of credulity. By comparing events with each other, reasoning from effects to causes, methinks I plainly discover the traces of an overruling influence." This was taken for a reference to Newcastle, though what traces of an overruling influence Pitt found, it is difficult to say. The great orator then delivered his soul, and the Stamp Act party found that he at least would meet them not with the hesitating and ambiguous utterances of the divided Ministry, but with a clear and certain voice.

"When the resolution was taken in the House to tax America, I was ill in bed. If I could have endured to have been carried in my bed, so great was the agitation of my mind for the consequences, I would have solicited some kind hand to have laid me down on this floor, to have borne my testimony against it. It is now an Act that has passed. I would speak with decency of every Act of this House, but must beg indulgence to speak of it with freedom. The subject of debate is of greater importance than ever engaged the attention of this House; that subject only excepted when nearly a

century ago, it was a question whether you yourselves were to be bond or free. The manner in which this affair will be terminated will decide the judgment of posterity of the glory of this kingdom, and the wisdom of its government during the present reign. . . . I must now, though somewhat unreasonably — leaving the expediency of the Stamp Act to another time — speak to a point of infinite moment, I mean to the right. Some seem to have considered it as a point of honour, and leave all measures of right and wrong, to follow a delusion that may lead us to destruction. . . . America being neither really nor virtually represented in Westminster, cannot be held legally, or constitutionally, or reasonably subject to obedience to any money bill of this kingdom. . . . The Americans are the sons, not the bastards of England. As subjects they are entitled to the common right of representation, and cannot be bound to pay taxes without their consent. Taxation is no part of the governing power. The taxes are a voluntary gift and grant of the Commons alone. In an American tax, what do we do? We, your Majesty's Commons of Great Britain, give and grant to your Majesty, what? our own property? No. We give and grant to your Majesty the property of your Majesty's Commons in America. It is an absurdity in terms. . . . There is an idea in some that the Colonies are virtually represented in this House. . . . I would fain know by whom an American is represented here? Is he represented by any Knight of the Shire? Would to God that respectable representation was augmented to a greater number! Or will you tell him that he is represented by any representative of a borough? a borough which, perhaps, no man ever saw. That is what is called the rotten part of the Constitution. It cannot endure

the century. If it does not drop it must be amputated. The idea of a virtual representation of America in this House is the most contemptible that ever entered into the head of a man. It does not deserve a serious refutation. The Commons of America, represented in their several assemblies, have ever been in possession of the exercise of this their constitutional right, of giving and granting their own money. They would have been slaves if they had not enjoyed it. . . . If this House suffers the Stamp Act to continue in force, France will gain more by your colonies than she ever could have done if her arms in the last war had been victorious. I never shall own the justice of taxing America internally until she enjoys the right of representation. In every other point of legislation, the authority of Parliament is like the North star, fixed for the reciprocal benefit of the parent country and her colonies. The British Parliament, as the supreme governing and legislative power, has always bound them by her laws, by her regulations of their trade and commerce, and even in a more absolute interdiction of both. Here I would draw the line."

Conway spoke a few words of deference to Pitt, and said that his speech expressed the sentiments of most, if not all, the King's servants. Then Grenville rose to defend his favourite measure, and to obliterate, if possible, the effect produced by Pitt's argument. He began with the disturbances in America, which he said "border on open rebellion; and if the doctrine I have heard this day be confirmed, nothing can tend more directly to produce a revolution." External and internal taxes are the same in effect; this kingdom is sovereign, and taxation is

part of the sovereign power. It is one branch of legislation. Parliament taxes the India Company, and many great towns, such as Manchester, which are not represented. So, too, it taxed the palatinate of Chester, and the bishopric of Wales before they sent representatives. The Crown cannot exempt by charter any family or colony from subordination to the Parliament. The Stamp Act is but the pretext of which they make use to arrive at independence. It was thoroughly considered. Protection and obedience are reciprocal. Great Britain protects America; America is bound to yield obedience.

"If not, tell me when the Americans were emancipated? Ungrateful people of America! Bounties have been extended to them. When I had the honour to serve the Crown, while you yourselves were loaded with an enormous debt of one hundred and forty millions, and paid a revenue of ten millions, you have given bounties on their lumber, their iron, their hemp and many other things. You have relaxed, in their favour, the Act of Navigation, that palladium of British commerce. I offered to do everything in my power to advance the trade of America. I discouraged no trade but what was prohibited by Act of Parliament."

Such is a summary of Grenville's argument, which is logical enough from the standpoint he always chose — that of the complete sovereignty of Parliament. When he ended, Pitt rose again, with his customary disregard for those rules of order which the ordinary Parliamentarian so deeply reverences. Grenville's speech had touched him to the quick,

and this reply was delivered with ardour and passion, in an impetuous torrent of oratory; no other speech of Pitt produced so great an effect, and few speeches that any man has delivered since the beginning of civilisation have produced wider results than this unpremeditated reply. Its influence on American opinion was decisive.

"I have been charged with giving birth to sedition in America. . . . I rejoice that America has resisted. If its millions of inhabitants had submitted, taxes would soon have been laid on Ireland; and if ever this nation should have a tyrant for its king, six millions of freemen, so dead to all the feelings of liberty, as voluntarily to submit to be slaves, would be fit instruments to make slaves of the rest. I come not here armed at all points with law cases and Acts of Parliament, with the Statute-book doubled down in dog's ears, to defend the cause of liberty. . . . I draw my ideas of freedom from the vital powers of the British Constitution, not from the crude and fallacious notions too much relied on as if we were but in the morning of liberty. . . . The gentleman tells us of many who are taxed, and are not represented — the India Company, merchants, stockholders, manufacturers. Many of these are represented in other capacities. They are all inhabitants, and as such are virtually represented. They have connection with those who elect, and they have influence over them. Not one of the Ministers who have taken the lead of government since the accession of King William, ever recommended a tax like this. None of them ever dreamed of robbing the colonies of their constitutional rights. That was reserved to mark the era of the late Administration. Not that there were wanting some, when I had the honour to

serve his Majesty, to propose to me that I should burn my fingers with the American Stamp Act. . . . If the gentleman cannot understand the difference between internal and external taxes, I cannot help it. But there is a plain distinction between taxes levied for the purpose of raising revenue, and duties imposed for the accommodation of the subject, although in the consequences, some revenue may accidentally arise from the latter.

"The gentleman asks, when were the colonies emancipated? I desire to know when they were made slaves. The profits to Great Britain from the trade of the colonies are two millions a year. That was the fund that carried you triumphantly through the last war. . . . And shall a miserable financier come with a boast, that he can filch a peppercorn into the exchequer to the loss of millions to the nation? I dare not say how much higher these profits may be augmented. Omitting the immense increase of people in the northern colonies by natural population, and the migration from every part of Europe, I am convinced the whole commercial system may be altered to advantage.

"A great deal has been said without doors of the strength of America. It is a topic that ought to be cautiously meddled with. In a good cause, on a sound bottom, the force of this country can crush America to atoms. But on this ground, on the Stamp Act, when so many here will think it a crying injustice, I am one who will lift up my hands against it. In such a cause your success will be hazardous. America if she fall, would fall like the strong man. She would embrace the pillars of the State, and pull down the Constitution along with her.

"Is this your boasted peace? Not to sheathe the sword in its scabbard, but to sheathe it in the bowels of

your countrymen? Will you quarrel with yourselves now the whole House of Bourbon is united against you? . . . The Americans have not acted in all things with prudence and temper. They have been driven to madness by injustice. Will you punish them for the madness you have occasioned? Rather let prudence and temper come first from this side. I will undertake for America that she will follow the example.

> 'Be to her faults a little blind,
> Be to her virtues very kind.'

"Upon the whole, I will beg leave to tell the House what is really my opinion. It is that the Stamp Act be repealed absolutely, totally and immediately. That the reason for the repeal be assigned, because it was founded on an erroneous principle. At the same time let the sovereign authority of this country over the colonies be asserted in as strong terms as can be assigned and be made to extend to every point of legislation whatsoever. That we may bind their trade, confine their manufactures, and exercise every power whatsoever, except that of taking their money out of their pockets without their own consent."

This speech states the principles which Pitt maintained throughout his life. Here is no trace of that arrogance which led Charles Townshend scornfully to reject the colonists as allies, or Northington to declare that America must submit. There is an agreeable irony in the reflection that Northington believed himself a better patriot than William Pitt. The men of narrow vision saw the greatness of their country vanish if she did not compel abject submission; but the man who had dispatched fleets and

armies, who knew the value of her troops, the skill of her officers, who confessed that he loved honourable war, was not intoxicated by power; his keener insight and more generous spirit perceived that the dominion of Great Britain must depend on the spontaneous loyalty of her people, that the effective sanction of her commands must be sought in a jealously guarded equality among all subjects. Directing and superintending authority must remain in the centre and seat of empire, but this authority must be used in the interests of what Pitt called "the wide-extended whole." Most of those who opposed the Stamp Act argued from the point of view of expediency, but Pitt laid even greater stress upon the principle involved. Great lawyers believed that Parliament had a legal right, as the great common council of the Empire, to tax any subject of Great Britain; that the only ground on which the colonists could claim exemption was in the privileges granted by their charters, and that even that exemption could not prevail, since the charters granted by the Crown were powerless to abrogate the authority of Parliament. In strict constitutional law, this argument was one of great force, but Pitt and Camden met it with the dogma that taxation was inseparable from representation,— a dogma, they said, which was the essence of the Great Charter, and had been strengthened by the invariable practice with regard to the colonies. The reply that the Americans were "virtually" represented was a misleading artifice, as was clearly shown in Daniel Delaney's pamphlet, *Considerations on the Propriety of Taxing the Col-*

onies, one of the ablest American arguments, from which Pitt freely quoted in this speech.* "The security of the British non-electors against oppression is that their oppression will fall also upon the electors and the representatives." If not taxed by Parliament they would never be taxed at all.

Questions of abstract right in politics, said Burke, ought to be left to the schools, for there only they can be discussed with safety; and when Parliament is sovereign and bound by no written Constitution there is no text or canon by which its right can be limited. Camden described his dogma as founded on "the eternal law of nature" that what is a man's own cannot be taken away except by his own consent. A great living authority, Sir William Anson, remarks that "the rhodomontade of Camden on this subject exhibits a treatment of constitutional law and legal history, astonishing in a man who enjoyed some reputation as a judge." † Pitt, who shared the delusion of his contemporaries that Camden was a great lawyer, called the speech "divine." It is clear, however, that Camden's eternal law of nature might have been overruled at any moment by Parliament, and that his doctrine of the inseparability of taxation and representation was only true as a statement of established usage. No abstract right of man limited the unfettered sovereignty of Parliament, and in contending against the right of Parliament, Pitt and

* See Mr. Tyler's interesting note, *op. cit.*, i., 111–113. His opinion that Pitt freely used the pamphlet is confirmed by Shelburne's letter to Pitt which refers to the great honour paid by the latter to Delaney's argument in the House of Commons. *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 192.

† Anson's *Grafton*, p. 68, note.

Camden were compelled to call in aid that abstract right. Grenville was technically accurate in asserting that what Parliament, the supreme lawmaker, formally enacted, could not be "illegal," but the mind which relies on such bare logical considerations and builds its conclusions on that narrow basis is certain to blunder in dealing with the complicated task of government. The vision and sympathy of Pitt were safer guides, and his treatment of this problem was an anticipation of the modern view of colonial rights, though his dogma of taxation was in theory open to dispute. Grenville was a sincere Whig and believed in Parliamentary government; he made his great mistake because he did not perceive that a perfectly legal exercise of Parliamentary authority may be, in fact though not in form, as provocative and as tyrannical as the levying of ship-money through the prerogative.

The immense effect created by Pitt's eloquence is shown by Rockingham's letter to the King, written on the following day; he observed that it showed how great was Pitt's influence whenever he chose to appear. "That your Majesty's present Administration will be shook to the greatest degree, if no further attempt is made to get Mr. Pitt to take a cordial part, is much too apparent to be disguised." * On January 16th, Grafton saw the King, who declared his firm resolution that no declaration should be carried to Mr. Pitt from him. Grafton went to Pitt and had a long conversation with him the same evening. Pitt said that

* *Rockingham Memoirs*, i., 270, January 15th.

"if he was called to form a proper system, it must be with the present Secretaries and First Lord of the Treasury, they co-operating, willing and thoroughly confidential; any honours or favours to be shewn to the Duke of Newcastle, but not to be of the Cabinet; as his perplexing and irksome jealousies would cast a damp upon the vigour of every measure. . . .

"He owned that he saw with pleasure the present administration take the places of the last; he came up upon the American affair, a point on which he feared they might be borne down." *

Encouraged by this interview, Grafton again saw the King, who was persuaded to allow Grafton and Rockingham to take a message from him to Pitt. Two questions were put: "First, whether, at this time, Mr. Pitt is disposed to come into the King's service; second, whether, if Lord Temple should decline to take a part, this will be a reason for Mr. Pitt declining also." On the first, writes Grafton, Pitt said

"that the men who now served his Majesty would be those with whom he should wish to act, but there must be a *transposition* of offices; which as he repeated it several times, appeared to me to be ill received by Lord Rockingham; but, as his lordship made no reply and I made no observation, this must be considered only as my opinion." †

Pitt said, further, that Temple's refusal to engage would not affect his own action. Nothing came of this interview, much to Grafton's surprise; Rocking-

* Anson's *Grafton*, pp. 65, 66. † *Ibid.*, 67.

ham was unwilling to accept a transposition of offices, and he represented to the King that Pitt's proposals were impracticable, whereupon Pitt was informed through Shelburne that "His Majesty does not judge proper to have any further proceeding in the matter." * It is hardly matter of wonder that Pitt was moved to resentment by these constant negotiations ending in nothing.

The policy finally adopted by the Ministers was to repeal the Stamp Act, and at the same time to pass a Declaratory Act affirming the right of Parliament to tax America. They succeeded, after many struggles, and mainly by the active assistance of Pitt, in carrying repeal. The colonists, satisfied by this great victory, voted thanks to the King and Parliament, and selected for special praise the names of Pitt, Camden, and Barré. Their Assemblies gained no honour by declining to vote compensation to those who had suffered by the riots, but a period of peace followed the storm, and little notice was taken of Rockingham's second measure. The justification of the Declaratory Act is usually found in the state of parties, which made it impossible to carry repeal without some counteracting act affirming British sovereignty. Rockingham was not powerful enough to persuade the King to permit repeal alone, and the Ministry existed by sufferance of the King's friends in Parliament. Although this reasoning supplies an apology for Rockingham, the Declaratory Act was an evil precedent, and a fatal acknowledgment of the strength of Grenville and the Bedfords; a deliberate

* Fitzmaurice's *Shelburne*, i., 376.

reassertion of the right to tax was an invitation to succeeding Ministers to put that right into operation. Pitt, Camden, and Shelburne opposed the Act, but they were almost alone. In other respects the Administration adopted a liberal and enlightened policy towards the colonists; they reduced the duty on West Indian molasses from sixpence to one penny, reaping a heavy revenue as reward, and they opened free ports in the islands. Burke was undoubtedly the instigator of these schemes, which were an advance on the ideas of the mercantile system. Pitt himself never grasped the most rudimentary notions of a free-trade philosophy.

On February 26th, Rockingham sent a formal memorandum to Mr. Pitt.* "He wished to God Mr. Pitt would give some plan for arranging an Administration, putting himself at the head of it." He desired to settle arrangements before laying the matter before the King, as he feared, if arrangements were not previously settled, it might end in breaking to pieces the present Administration. Pitt declined any conference on the formation of an Administration, without the express commands of the King; to obtrude his opinion would be the highest presumption. "The King's pleasure and gracious commands alone shall be a call to me; I am deaf to every other thing. The sum of things is that I am fitter for a lonely hill in Somersetshire than for the affairs of State." †

Matters continued thus, Grafton and Conway be-

* *Chatham Correspondence*, ii., 397–401.

† *Ibid.*, iii., 12. Pitt to Shelburne, February 24, 1766.

ing well aware that the Ministry might fall at any moment; Rockingham, however, came to think that he could stand without Pitt, and on April 21st, declared without hesitation to Grafton, that "he would never advise his Majesty to call Mr. Pitt into his closet; that this was a fixed resolution to which he would adhere." * In May, the King consulted with Hardwicke, who declined high office; Hardwicke writes: "I endeavoured to sound the King's disposition towards Mr. Pitt, but he appeared not at all favourable to him at that moment; called his popularity an *ignis fatuus*, and took some merit in not having admitted him to state his own terms, which he knew were levelled against his present Administration." † In the same month Grafton resigned, on the express ground, publicly stated, that "he knew but one man, Mr. Pitt, who could give the Ministers strength and solidity; that under him he should be willing to serve in any capacity, not only as a general officer, but as a pioneer, and would take up a spade and mattock." Though Grafton was succeeded by the Duke of Richmond, the Ministry was on the eve of dismissal. The death-blow was struck by the Lord Chancellor, who had always been the foe of Rockingham; on a report concerning the government of Quebec he openly quarrelled with his colleagues, went to the King and informed him it was impossible for the Ministers to govern the country, declined attending the Cabinet, and refused to hold the Great Seal under such government. On July 12, 1766, the Rockingham Administration ended.

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 76. † *Rockingham Memoirs*, i., 337.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHATHAM MINISTRY.

1766–1769.

GEORGE III., when he ascended the throne, was intent upon getting rid of Pitt, but he seems to have cherished some liking and respect for the great War Minister during the first ten years of his reign. Pitt was extravagant, almost oriental, in his expressions of devotion and loyalty, and his critics have frequently ridiculed the contradiction between his patriot speeches and exuberant professions to the King. "The least peep into the royal closet intoxicated him," said Burke. In reality monarchy captivated his imagination very much as the French monarchy captivated the imagination of Burke, and although George III. disliked eloquence in the closet as sincerely as he disliked the poetry of Shakespeare, Pitt's magniloquent submissiveness was more pleasing than the calm common sense of Rockingham, or the hectoring dictation of Bedford and Grenville. There was a more substantial reason for royal encouragement of Pitt in his ideas concerning party, which the King was determined to put

into effect. A great distinction existed between George III.'s objection to Government by connections and that of Pitt. "The ruling humour of the King," as Horace Walpole astutely said, "was that whoever attached himself to any First Minister was not his Majesty's man." On the other hand, Pitt's view was expressed in his frequent saying, "Connections as to men are mean, but as to measures commendable." It is clear that the King did not call in Pitt because he believed in his measures; he feared, possibly, that a longer tenure of office might tend to consolidate the Rockinghams, though he knew their weakness at the time. Whatever his reason, the sovereign determined to call in the most illustrious of his subjects, and Northington was commissioned to write to Pitt in the King's name, and to enclose a letter from the King himself.* "Your very dutiful and handsome conduct the last summer makes me desirous of having your thought how an able and distinguished Ministry may be formed," wrote the King.

Pitt hurried to town from Burton Pynsent, wishing (he wrote) "that he could change infirmity into wings of expedition." His interview with the King was a very satisfactory one, as no objection was raised to any of Pitt's suggestions. It was agreed that the basis of administration should be found in the existing Ministry, but the disposal of offices was postponed until Lord Temple should arrive. The

* The letters concerning this negotiation are in *Chatham Correspondence*, ii., 462–471. See also Anson's *Grafton*, pp. 89–97.

breach of opinion on the American question had cooled the ardour of Pitt's friendship with his ally, but Pitt intended to offer him the Treasury. Temple first saw the King, who wrote an account of the interview to Pitt. "I opened to him a desire of seeing him in the Treasury. I am sorry to see, though we only kept in generals, that he seems to incline to quarters very heterogeneous to my and your idea of things, and almost a total exclusion to the present men,—which is not your plan." On the following day Pitt and Temple had a long conversation, which resulted in Temple's definite refusal to take office. Pitt offered him the Treasury, and the appointment of his own Board, but further than that he declined to go, either in the exclusion of present Ministers or the appointment of others, such as Gower and Lyttleton, whom Temple desired to include. Temple's view was that he ought to come in on an equality with Pitt. Pitt, on the other hand, declined to admit this equality. Contemporary gossip exaggerated the quarrel, and stories of high words were naturally believed.* As a matter of fact the conversation was peaceably conducted, though Temple was greatly enraged; "I must do justice," wrote Pitt to his wife, "to the kind and affectionate behaviour which Lord Temple held throughout the whole of our long talk." Temple wrote to George Grenville:

"The intended basis of the new, virtuous, and patriotic Administration, is to be the Rump of the last,

* See, e. g., Walpole, *Memoirs of George III.*, ii., 243, 245.

strengthened by the particular friends of Mr. Pitt, the whole consisting of all the most choice spirits who did in the last Session most eminently distinguish themselves in the sacrifice and honour of the whole legislature and kingdom of Great Britain. At the head of this I might have stood a capital cypher, surrounded with cyphers of quite a different complexion, the whole under the guidance of that great Luminary, the Great Commoner, with the Privy Seal in his hand." *

In a word, Temple declared he would not go in like a child to come out like a fool. Pitt had done ample justice to his claims by offering the Treasury. †

Pitt told Grafton that the King heartily adopted and would support Mr. Pitt's determination of standing in the gap to defend the closet against every contending party, and his plan was eventually to select the men of the best talents and fortunes and highest rank from every party. But no immediate steps were taken to gather together a coalition of all the interests and all the talents, as the Ministry consisted of the followers of Pitt and Rockingham with a sprinkling of the King's friends. Camden became Lord Chancellor, Grafton First Lord of the

* *Grenville Papers*, iii., 267. Walpole states inaccurately that Temple insisted on bringing in George Grenville.

† Lord Temple declined a visit Pitt proposed making to Stowe and published a bitter pamphlet written by Humphrey Coates against Pitt. The reply contains one sentence which Chesterfield thought was in Pitt's style: "Had he [Ld. Temple] not fastened himself into Mr. Pitt's train, he might have crept out of life with as little notice as he crept in; and gone off with no other degree of credit, than that of adding a single unit to the bills of mortality."

Treasury, Northington President of the Council, Shelburne and Conway Secretaries of State, Granby Commander-in-Chief, Saunders First Lord of the Admiralty, and Charles Townshend, after great hesitation, Chancellor of the Exchequer. These were men of abilities, but taken alone they hardly represented any greater strength in Parliament than that which Pitt's first Ministry of 1756 possessed. The process of securing support was not made easier by Pitt's method of dealing with men, which was somewhat curt and offensive. As Grafton wrote:

"His views were great and noble, worthy of a patriot: but they were too visionary to expect that ambitious and interested men would co-operate in promoting them. He had persuaded himself, that his weight as a statesman, together with his present popularity, and the cause well supported by his Majesty, would be able to reconcile every man to those parts which he had designed for them. Mr. Pitt's plan was Utopian, and I will venture to add, that he lived too much out of the world to have a right knowledge of mankind.*

Rockingham was among those who were hostile to Pitt, and when the latter called at his house the ex-Minister refused to see him, an incident that made a great noise in the world.

"I took my chance to-day at Lord Rockingham's door," wrote Pitt to Grafton,† "but found his lordship going out, so was not let in. I meant to make a visit of respect, as a private man to Lord Rockingham, and had I found his lordship, to have told him, as Pitt to Lord

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 91. † *Ibid.*, 98.

Rockingham, what I understood to be the King's fixed intentions."

The outside view of the incident is given in a letter from Charles Lloyd to Grenville:

"Lord Rockingham has bearded Mr. Pitt in letting him come in as far as his hall, and then sending word by a footman that he could not see him. The explanation he gave of this at the Board to-day, is, that as a private man he would on every occasion that he could, resent Mr. Pitt's contemptuous usage of him; as a public man, he should neither oppose nor support his measures. Pitt says, I hear, that he is resolved never to be angry again, but that if this had happened twenty years ago, Lord Rockingham should have heard of it, for he would have taken no such usage from the first Duke in the land." *

Conway had, at the instigation of the Cavendishes, persuaded Pitt to make this visit; it was a final attempt to bring about some accommodation between Pitt and the ministerial Whigs, who were alienated by the dismissal of Rockingham and Richmond to make way for Grafton and Shelburne.† It was a great weakness of the Administration that it consisted largely of men whose chiefs were thus disgusted and displaced.

There was a yet more serious weakness revealed before the Ministers kissed hands. Grafton depicts the dismay which its discovery caused to his colleagues and himself.

"Being appointed to the Queen's house, I found Lord Northington and Lord Camden already there. Mr. Pitt

* *Grenville Papers*, iii., 283.

† Walpole, *Memoirs of George III.*, ii., 248–253.

was in with the King. The two Lords appeared to be in most earnest conversation, and much agitated. On perceiving it, I naturally was turning from them, after my bow; but they begged to impart to me the subject of their concern, asking me whether I had any previous knowledge of Mr. Pitt's intention of obtaining an earldom, and thus placing himself in the House of Lords; whereas our conception of the strength of the Administration had been, till that moment, derived from the great advantage he would have given to it by remaining with the Commons. On this there was but one voice among us, nor indeed throughout the kingdom. . . . We were all struck with the idea of the prejudice it would do to his new Administration.*

The great Commoner had decided to leave the House of Commons, and a strong popular outcry arose against what was alleged to be a desertion of the people. The City of London had prepared to illuminate their public buildings as a sign of rejoicing on his return to power, but when it was known that Pitt was made Earl of Chatham the orders for illuminations were countermanded. His colleagues were naturally dismayed; they perceived that they had no man in the Commons who was the equal of Grenville, and that rivalry between Conway and Charles Townshend was inevitable in that assembly. As Chesterfield said, Chatham's enemies rejoiced and his friends were sad when they learned that he was to join the hospital for incurables. George Grenville pointed the analogy between the cases of Pulteney and Pitt, and insinuated that Bute had

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 97.

offered the advice to George III. concerning the one that Walpole had offered to George II. concerning the other. It was a suspicious age, and the belief was widely entertained that Chatham was to be the tool of Bute. This loss of popularity was inevitable, as the people could no longer boast that Mr. Pitt was one of themselves, that he served the nation without title or reward; yet it may safely be said that no peerage was ever more worthily earned, and that Chatham's weak health made constant attendance in the House of Commons no longer possible for him. He was an invalid all his life; a high-strung, nervous system had been feverishly worked upon by his arduous and exacting labours during the war. He desired to return to power, but he must clearly have realised that office and the Commons combined were more than his strength could bear. He was nearly sixty years of age, and his constitution was broken. No doubt the pomp and circumstance of the peerage appealed to him, for he loved splendour and display, but there is nothing whatever in his acceptance of an earldom to warrant the suspicions of his contemporaries. On July 30, 1766—the day on which the new Ministers kissed hands, the peerage was gazetted. "I know the Earl of Chatham," wrote the King, "will zealously give his aid towards destroying all party distinctions, and restoring that subordination to government, which can alone preserve that inestimable blessing, liberty, from degenerating into licentiousness."

Chatham plunged into matters of high policy as soon as he entered office. No other man of his

time, except perhaps Shelburne, thought very much about policy when engaged in negotiations about office, but it was always true of Chatham that if he desired power, it was because he would exercise it for noble ends. A fortnight before the King summoned him to London he wrote to Lady Stanhope in his grandiose style: "Your Ladyship sees how the old surly English leaven, works still in a retired breast. Farming, grazing, haymaking, and all the Lethe of Somersetshire cannot obliterate the memory of days of activity. France is still the object of my mind."* English statesmen had been curiously oblivious of foreign politics since the peace, but Choiseul in France and Grimaldi in Spain had been ceaselessly preparing, plotting, and watching for any opportunity of revenge for the last war. The Bourbon alliance was active and close; exact and careful reports of English politics, of affairs in America, were regularly sent to Choiseul. The news that Chatham was once more in power created anxiety in France.† Choiseul wrote to the French Ambassador in London:

"We cannot understand Lord Chatham's motive in leaving the House of Commons. To us it would seem that all his strength was bound up in his continuance in that Chamber, and he is very likely to find himself as weak as Samson after his locks were shorn. What we fear is, that this proud and ambitious man, having lost

* Stanhope, *History of England*, v., app.

† "Luckily France and Spain are unable to commence a war and their fear of Mr. Pitt's entry into the Ministry is quite ridiculous." Yorke (at The Hague) to Mitchell. *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 42.

the popular favour, may wish to recover from his fall by warlike exploits and projects of conquest that will give him reputation. I am convinced that his quarrel with Lord Temple will not last." *

Again Choiseul wrote: "My object is to avert suspicion in England; I recommend that unceasingly to M. de Querchy (in London) and I flatter myself I have arranged my plan with Spain. In 1770 we shall certainly have a very fine army, a respectable navy and some money in the treasury." † Austria still inclined to the Bourbon party, intrigues were carried on all over Europe, especially in Sweden and Poland, and plans of acquisition were carefully prepared, as they had been in regard to Prussia before the last war. France was to obtain Avignon and Corsica, Spain to receive Portugal and Gibraltar, while new schemes for the invasion of England employed the leisure of Choiseul, who was almost as ambitious as Chatham himself. ‡ Chatham, in fact, though he had "inflexibly arraigned" the peace, realised from the first that Great Britain must observe it, but he by no means intended to remain idle while Choiseul and Grimaldi sought alliances.

In 1765, one of the questions asked by Pitt had been, whether his Majesty was pleased to intend a counter-system to be formed to the House of Bourbon; he could not serve without an answer to that. He avowed himself still in the Prussian Sentiment. §

* Fitzmaurice's *Shelburne*, i., 412.

† *Ibid.*, ii., 4.

‡ See the remarks of Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice, *Ibid.*, ii., 1–6.

§ *Rockingham Memoirs*, i., 195, 196.

The King had made no objection to this part of Pitt's policy, but no serious effort had been made to deal with the position. Now that Pitt was in office, France was still the object of his mind, and his first thought was how to strengthen the position of Great Britain. He attempted to create "such a firm and solid system in the North, as may prove a counterbalance to the great and formidable alliance framed by the House of Bourbon on the basis of the family compact." * The whole policy is outlined in the Cabinet minute:

"Resolved, That his Majesty be advised to take the proper measures for forming a triple defensive alliance, for the maintaining of the public tranquillity, in which the Crown of Great Britain, the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia to be the original contracting parties; with provision for inviting to accede thereto the Crowns of Denmark and Sweden, and the States-general together with such of the German or other powers as the original contracting parties shall agree upon, and as are not engaged in the family compact of the House of Bourbon." †

Hans Stanley was to be sent as Ambassador to Russia, with instructions to proceed first to Berlin and open the whole plan to Frederick. In some respects the moment was favourable for such a project; Catherine the Great was allied with Prussia and desired a combination of the North; she had succeeded in overthrowing French influence in Sweden, and was endeavouring to persuade Denmark to

* Conway to Mitchell, August 8, 1766, *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 29.

† *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 31.

depend upon Russia instead of upon France. A project of a defensive alliance had been sent from St. Petersburg to London in the previous year, but Russia had insisted that the *casus fœderis* should extend to a Turkish war, and that had been declared inadmissible by the English Ministers.* Stanley in a letter to Chatham points out some of the difficulties he anticipated. Russia, being at the head of affairs in the North, did not urgently need English assistance, and would not be likely to accept a treaty except on her own terms; she might at any moment return to "the old system of a close connection with the House of Austria, as being advantageous in disputes with the Turks"; Frederick had strengthened his alliance with Russia, and he desired, even with jealousy, to reserve that connection exclusively to himself.

In September, 1766, Frederick's Minister told Sir George Macartney† that "if Russia had any intention of concluding a treaty with us, and admitting an exception for Turkey, he had orders from his master to oppose it in the strongest manner."‡ Prussia was a more valuable ally to Russia than England could be, and the success of Chatham's scheme depended on Frederick.

Frederick received the project coldly; he hinted at the bad treatment he had received from Great Britain at the peace, and at the unsettled and fluctuating state of the British Government, and when

* Macartney to Mitchell, July 22, 1766, *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 36–37. † British Ambassador to Russia.

‡ *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 36–40.

Mitchell assured him of Chatham's constant devotion, he replied, "I fear my friend has hurt himself by accepting of a peerage at this time."* Frederick added that there were matters likely to be the occasion of a war between Great Britain and France in which Prussia would have no interest. An argumentative and hortatory dispatch, which bears internal marks of Chatham's authorship, was sent by Conway to Mitchell.†

"If his Prussian Majesty is cordial, if he is disposed to this great union, we meet him more than half way. If he expects to be entreated, he shall know it is not for his Majesty's honour to go further than the step already taken. A continuance of hesitation will be looked on as a refusal."

Frederick, however, declined the proposal. "When the storm seems to be rising, then, and not till then, is the time of uniting together, and of concerting measures to ward off the impending danger," he said to Mitchell, and as a private man he repeated that he could not forget the ill-usage and injustice he had met with at the time of making the last peace. "I have a very high opinion of Lord Chatham, and great confidence in him; but what assurances can you give me, that he has power, and will continue in office?"‡ Bute's treachery was not to be lightly forgiven by Frederick the Great. The negotiation with Russia failed on the former ground

*Stanley to Chatham, *Ibid.*, iii., 70.

†*Ibid.*, iii., 82–84.

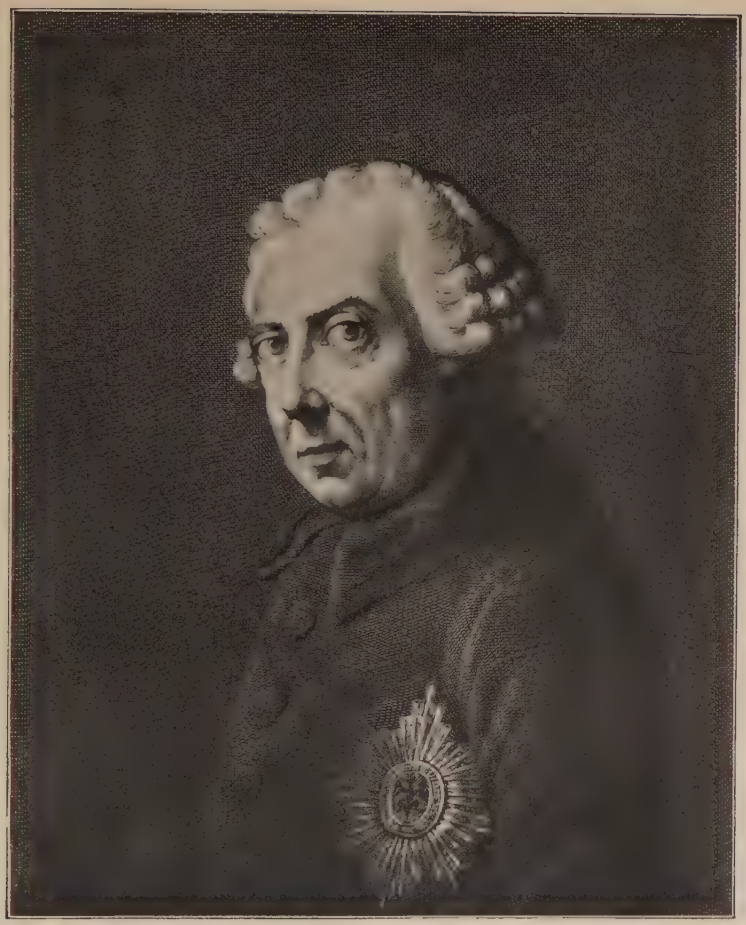
‡Mitchell to Chatham, *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 139.

of the Turkish question, and Great Britain had secured no solid system to counterbalance the Bourbons before Chatham's illness removed him from activity. Choiseul was successful in his patient diplomacy, and when the time came to strike the blow against England which he had so long premeditated, the enemy of France was without an ally in Europe.

Another great question of State, the relation of the East India Company, with its vast territorial acquisitions, towards the Government, engaged Chatham's attention. Was the new Empire won during the war to be administered solely for the benefit of the trading company, its officers and shareholders? The years immediately following the conquests of Clive were undoubtedly the worst in the history of English government in India. The directors could not control their subordinates, no pressure of English opinion could be felt at so great a distance, and the whole system was one of violence and pillage. Chatham held the view that the Company only shared with the State its right to the territorial revenues which had been granted by the subject princes.

"As to the transcendent object, East Indian affairs, the consideration of the Company's right to this enormous revenue is the source from which the whole transaction must flow and the hinge upon which must turn the very essence of the question; namely, whether the Company is to receive on this head indulgence and benefit from the public, or whether they are to impart some to the public." *

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 199.



FREDERICK THE GREAT.

FROM THE ENGRAVING BY MEYER IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM PRINT ROOM.

The method by which Chatham proposed the determination of the right, was to throw responsibility upon the Commons. Nowadays such a principle would be stated by the Cabinet, but Chatham emphatically declined to follow what would now be the usual course. He employed Beckford to move for an inquiry into Indian affairs, which was granted notwithstanding opposition.

From the committee of inquiry a declaration would be obtained,*

"(*a*) that it appears by the Charter, Acts, etc. that the East India Company was instituted for the purposes of trade; (*b*) that the acquisitions and cessions of territories and revenues obtained in India for the retaking of Calcutta from the country by the Company, were made in consequence of actual and extensive operations of war, and succours stipulated."

By this Parliamentary determination, Chatham intended to establish the public claim to a share in the Indian revenue.

He had, however, wider ideas of Indian policy, which he expressed some years later to Shelburne, who understood as well as his leader the magnitude of the questions involved. When the East India Regulation Bill of 1773 was before Parliament, Chatham thus expressed himself upon it:

"India teems with iniquities so rank, as to smell to earth and heaven. The reformation of them, if formed in a pure spirit of justice, might exalt the nation,

* Fitzmaurice's *Shelburne*, ii., 24, 25.

and endear the English name throughout the world. The putting under circumspection and control the high and dangerous prerogative of war and alliances, so abused in India, I cannot but approve ; as it shuts the door against such insatiable rapine and detestable enormities, as have, on some occasions, stained the English name and disgraced human nature. I approve, too, of the nomination of judges by the Crown. . . . The abolition of inland trade on private account is highly laudable, as far as that provision goes ; but I would assuredly carry the prohibition further, and open again to the native and other Eastern merchants the inland trade of Bengal, and abolish all monopolies on the Company's account ; which now operate to the unjust exclusion of an oppressed people, and to the impoverishing and alienating of those extensive and populous provinces. The hearts and good affections of Bengal are of more worth than all the profits of ruinous and odious monopolies." *

Although Chatham never grasped this most important of imperial problems, in the detail of its difficulties, these opinions of his show that his attitude toward the general question approached that which was adopted by those later statesmen who have gradually built up the humane and beneficent system of to-day. He was among the pioneers of good government. But in this as in his foreign policy his endeavours were cut short by illness, and their immediate effect was seen only in increased division among his colleagues ; Grafton and Shelburne agreed with Chatham, but Conway and Charles Townshend

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iv., 286, 287.

both believed that the Company had a sole right to the territorial revenues.

On the Irish question, also, Chatham's opinions were in advance of his time. He would have granted to Ireland a much larger share of constitutional freedom and political liberty than she enjoyed at that date. There were four points which were constantly agitated in Ireland: an Act to shorten the duration of Parliaments, which were then elected for the King's life; a Bill for securing the independence of judges by making their tenure of office depend on good behaviour and not on the pleasure of the Crown; a Habeas Corpus Act, and the grievance of the Pension list. "Lord Chatham," says Grafton, "inclined to concede to the Irish Ministry the three or four points at which they previously aspired." * He also stipulated that the Lord Lieutenant should permanently reside in Ireland, not only for the brief period of six months in two years, a stipulation intended to curb the power of the Lords Justices or "undertakers," who managed affairs in the Lord Lieutenant's absence. Towards the Irish Parliament, as towards the American Assemblies, he advocated what he himself called great tenderness, and all the softening and healing arts of Government consistent with its dignity. Thus, in 1757, during Bedford's viceroyalty, when the Irish Commons declined to vote supplies, Pitt wrote to the Duke:

"With regard to the disagreeable but short postponing of the supply, as an apprehension of the privilege of

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 157.

the House being at stake had first raised and would have nourished dissatisfaction, on a common principle of Parliamentary union, found at all times more comprehensive than any other; your Grace's prudence, in not persevering to maintain so disadvantageous and difficult a ground, has met with entire approbation." *

The same principle governed him in relation to the absentee tax which passed the Irish Commons, a tax that was vehemently opposed by Burke and the Rockinghams, many of whom would have suffered under its provisions. In a letter to Shelburne, who was himself a great absentee Irish landlord, but through Chatham's influence no opponent of the tax, Chatham states his reason for declining to oppose the act of the Irish Parliament:

"The justice or policy of the tax is not the question; the single question is, have the Commons of Ireland exceeded the powers lodged with them by the essential constitution of Parliament? I answer, they have not; and the interference of the British Parliament would in that case, be unjust, and the measure destructive of all fair correspondence between England and Ireland for ever." †

He declined to join Rockingham in advising the Crown to overrule the representative Chamber in a matter of taxation. It was, in fact, a fundamental rule, which Pitt consistently observed, that supplies are a free grant by the Commons, and he applied this to the Irish Parliament in 1761, when an attempt was made to establish the principle that all Money

* *Chatham Correspondence*, i., 286. † *Ibid.*, iv., 320.

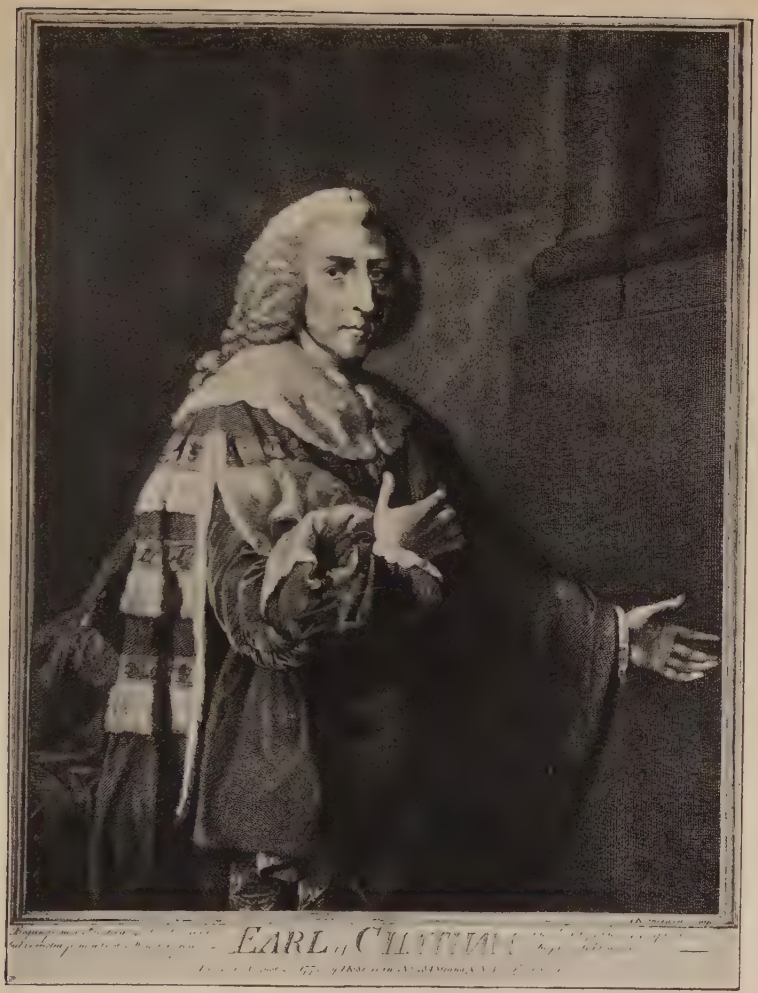
Bills, even at the commencement of a new reign, should originate, not with the Privy Council, but with the representative Chamber. A severe reprimand was addressed to the Irish Council. "Mr. Pitt alone took up the defence of the Irish Commons, and would not sign the message, which thirty-five others of the English Privy Council who were present signed."* Thus Pitt had illustrated by his own action as Minister the principle of his great speech against the Stamp Act. While there is no evidence in such opinions as these of a great consistent Irish policy, or even of that appreciation of the deeper evils existing in Ireland which Chatham's son displayed, they are the expression of a generous and liberal mind. It is remarkable that during his glorious quadrennium Pitt was almost as popular in Ireland as in Great Britain; the Irish Parliament was even more devoted to his views than that of which he was himself member, and its members incurred the displeasure of the King by omitting from their address all eulogy of the peace. The merchants and traders of Dublin expressed to Pitt their enthusiastic admiration for his career, and it may be doubted whether any other distinctively English statesman has been commemorated, as he was, by a statue erected in his honour by the citizens of Cork.†

With ideas such as these on foreign affairs, India and Ireland, Chatham might in his Ministry have rendered positive service to the State, in addition to that all-important negative service of averting the

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George III.*, i., 24.

† Lecky, *History of England*, iv., 365.

American peril. But a gloomy fate overshadowed the Administration from its very beginning. The chief Minister was, as he said, fitter for a lonely life in Somersetshire than for the cares of State, and his bad health rendered impossible that constant leadership which was necessary to keep his colleagues together. Parliament met on November 11th, and on this day Chatham made his first speech in the Lords. A bad harvest had produced great scarcity, and in order to prevent a further diminution of the food-supply Ministers had by proclamation laid an embargo on the export of corn. Such a proclamation was technically extra-legal, and those who acted under it subjected themselves to penalties; Ministers proposed to pass an Act indemnifying the inferior agents, but the Opposition believed they had found an opportunity of damaging the Administration; they declaimed against the stretching of the prerogative, and moved to include Ministers themselves in the proposed indemnity. Chatham began his speech with a characteristic and "eloquent description of his feelings, from the new situation in which he spoke, in an unaccustomed place, before the most knowing in the laws, in the presence of the hereditary legislators of the realm, whilst he could not look upon the House without remembering that it had just been filled by majesty, and by all the tender virtues which encompass it." How different was this last characteristic encomium from the haughty address to the Speaker, "Even that Chair, Sir, sometimes looks towards St. James's!" His defence of the embargo was perfectly constitutional: it was


EARL of CHATHAM

an act of power justifiable before Parliament on the ground of necessity.* The Opposition were right in compelling Ministers themselves to ask for indemnification, and Chatham accepted this view. It was a maladroit remark of Camden's, that this was at worst but a "forty-days' tyranny" which increased popular interest in the affair, and created an opening for much eloquence against the prerogative from Mansfield, Grenville, and other warm friends of liberty. A month later the Bill of Indemnity was discussed in the Lords, and a famous scene occurred between Richmond and Chatham, who at this date, December 10th, had been harassed into a feverish irritability by abortive negotiations with the various parties.

"Lord Chatham said, that when the people should condemn him, he should tremble; but would set his face against the proudest connections in this country. The Duke of Richmond took this up with great heat and severity, and said, he hoped the nobility would not be brow-beaten by an insolent Minister. The House calling him to order, he said with great quickness, he was sensible truth was not to be spoken at all times, and in all places. Lord Chatham challenged the Duke to give an instance in which he had treated any man with insolence; if the instance was not produced, the charge of insolence would lie on his Grace. The Duke said he could not name the instance without betraying private conversation; and he congratulated Lord Chatham on his new connection, looking, as he spoke, at Lord Bute." †

* Flood to Charlemont, *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 127.

† Walpole's *Memoirs of George III.*, ii., 290, 291.

Richmond received credit for showing greater courage to Chatham's face than any member had ever shown in the Commons. He had "avenged his party at a blow," according to Walpole. It was believed that Chatham was cowed by this imperious young nobleman, because he did not appear again in the Lords during his Ministry, and contemporaries attributed Chatham's retirement from activity to his dread of Richmond. It is only his contemporaries who can accept theories such as that about a great man. Nevertheless it is certain that Chatham, though his greatest orations were delivered to the peers, never acquired the personal ascendancy over the Lords which he exercised at will over the Commons. "The silence of the place, and the decency of debate there," says Walpole, who was a connoisseur of oratory as of architecture, "were not suited to the inflammatory eloquence by which Lord Chatham had been accustomed to raise hurras from a more numerous auditory." The peers, for the most part, were cool and cynical critics; they distrusted passion; they looked with suspicion upon this man, who paid ornate compliments to their ancestry and yet spoke with haughtiness and pride and an inexplicable authority. Northington prided himself on being no patron of the people, and he was a type of the new creation whom the Lords welcomed from the lower Chamber, but Chatham declared that when the people should condemn him he would tremble!

It was not, however, any failure in Parliament that weakened his Ministry, but a course of unfortunate

negotiations which took place during the autumn. These began with an overture from Lord Tavistock, on behalf of the Bedford connection, to Grafton, who was told that Bedford disclaimed the Grenvilles, and would be ready to assist on no other conditions than places for Lord Gower, Rigby, and Vernon.* Chatham, however, would not offer more than the Admiralty for Gower, and this was declined in a friendly letter.† Sir Charles Saunders was appointed. Bristol was given the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, and Hertford became Master of Horse, with a promise of the Lord Chamberlain's office; these promotions urged Lord Northumberland, Bute's son-in-law, to insist upon a dukedom, according to a previous arrangement, which Chatham fulfilled. This, together with a reinstatement of Bute's brother, Stuart Mackenzie, who had been dismissed by Grenville from a Scottish office entirely as a slight to the King and Bute, gave colour to the popular suspicion that Chatham was in league with the favourite. As a matter of fact, Chatham, after Bute's retirement from Government, regarded him as one of the leaders of a connection, and he was willing to include some of his followers in place, in accordance with his scheme of uniting the various sections in one administration. In October, Chatham went to Bath, and then the negotiations with Bedford were renewed; in a conversation with Horace Walpole the Minister talked very frankly, declared his absolute belief in the King's sincerity, and said that he wished to take

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George III.*, ii., 252.

† Anson's *Grafton*, p. 100.

some of all parties. None the less he and Bedford did not come to terms, though they parted with friendliness, the Duke convinced that the matter would be arranged.* "Not a word was spoken of the subject of America, nor of any arrangements. They parted in similar conceptions that this interview was merely preparatory to another; and this accounts for a great part of the Bedford interest being neuter at the meeting of Parliament." †

Unfortunately, when Chatham returned to London, he made a disastrous error, by removing Lord Edgcumbe from the post of Treasurer of the Household, a position he wanted for Sir John Shelley. Edgcumbe was offered in a discourteous way a Lordship of the Bedchamber, and, on his refusing this, was dismissed from his place. He was a favourite with the Rockinghams, and Bessborough attempted to accommodate the matter by offering to resign his own place, but this Chatham haughtily declined, as though it had been a factious proceeding. Edgcumbe's dismissal created the greatest indignation and there was an exodus of leading Whigs,—Portland, Bessborough, Scarborough, Saunders, Keppel, and Meredith all resigning. The most influential men in the last Ministry thus formally joined the Opposition in the last week of November. Chatham was very angry, but determined to stand to his guns; he relied on the firmness of the King and prepared to fight the factions. The negotiations

* Walpole's *Memoirs of George III.*, ii., 261, 262; *Bedford Correspondence*, iii., 348–354; Anson's *Grafton*, p. 102.

† *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 122, quoting the *Political Register*.

with Bedford were, however, renewed. Rigby opposed Beckford's motion for an inquiry into Indian affairs, and this made it doubtful if he ought to receive a place. The following day Chatham wrote to Grafton:

"Unions, with whomsoever it be, give me no terrors; I know my ground and I leave them to indulge their own *Dreams*. If they can conquer I am ready to fall; but I shall never consent to take any premature step from the consideration of what Rigby's *Manœuvres* may produce. I doubt whether that gentleman can be admitted . . . *faction will not shake the Closet, nor gain the publick* . . . the Closet is firm, and there is nothing to fear." *

But none the less an offer was made of a Cabinet office for Gower and other places for Rigby and Weymouth. This the King called "my ultimatum." † Bedford asked for more places, was refused, and on the next day went out of town to Woburn. Thus Chatham found himself opposed by both Rockinghams and Bedfords, as well as by his own relations, the Grenvilles. He needed all his own courage and all the King's firmness to meet so powerful a union. George III. was ready for the fray, and the following passage from the sovereign to his Minister illustrates the spirit of both. It was written after receiving news of Bedford's refusal to join.

"I know the uprightness of my cause, and that my principal Ministers mean nothing but to aid in making my people happy. . . . This hour demands a due

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 107. † *Chatham Correspondence*, iv., 136.

firmness; 't is that has already dismayed all the hopes of those just retired, and will, I am confident, show the Bedfords of what little consequence they also are. A contrary conduct would at once overturn the very end proposed at the formation of the present administration; for to rout out the present method of parties banding together, can only be obtained by a withstanding their unjust demands, as well as the engaging able men, be their private connections where they will." *

The ability of the administration was certainly increased by the appointment of Sir Edward Hawke to the Admiralty, though the grant of minor places to the King's friends added neither lustre nor credit; but the primary condition of a successful contest with the Opposition was unanimity among the leading Ministers themselves. There were many causes that divided: in the first place, Pitt's withdrawal from the Commons opened a wide door to the ambition of Charles Townshend, who believed he could make himself First Minister, and Chatham did not treat Conway, the leader of the House, with that complete confidence which alone could give him the authority necessary to discomfit the brilliant and audacious Townshend; again, Chatham's two most sincere supporters, Grafton and Shelburne, were not on friendly and open terms, and did not make an effective combination; on the most important questions laid before Parliament, the East India Company, in Chatham's own words, "a certain infelicity fermented and soured the councils of his Majesty's servants": and there was the permanent difficulty

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 137.

that Conway and the few Rockinghamites remaining owned a divided allegiance. Nevertheless, if Chatham had been in full possession of his natural powers, his authority was great enough to overcome these difficulties; perhaps the most convincing of all testimonies paid to his greatness by those who associated with him was the remark of Townshend to Grafton after a Cabinet Council.

"The business (writes Grafton) was on a general view and statement of the actual situation and interests of the various powers in Europe: Lord Chatham had certainly taken the lead in this consideration in so masterly a manner, as to raise the admiration and desire of us all to co-operate with him in forwarding these views. Mr. Townshend was particularly astonished, and owned to me, as I was carrying him in my carriage home, that Lord Chatham had just shown to us what inferior animals we were: and that, as much as he had seen of him before, he did not conceive, till that night, his superiority to be so very transcendent." *

Such was the personal influence of Chatham when he was present in Council over the least tractable of his colleagues; but it was dependent upon his presence, and could not be exercised from a sick room at Bath. Charles Townshend "soon forgot the great and extensive mind of the Minister," and became absorbed in his two great political ambitions, a revenue drawn from America and a peerage for his wife.

When Parliament rose in December, Chatham

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 105.

went to Bath. He was not sensible, nor would he be persuaded, said the most loyal of his friends, of the many difficulties under which his administration laboured, though they were viewed with real concern by the nation at large.* On January 11th, he set out for London, but a bad attack of gout compelled him to return to Bath, where he remained till February 15th, when he got as far as the Castle Inn, Marlborough. Here again he was taken ill, and remained in complete seclusion until the first day of March, when he reached London. Lord Holland used to tell a traditional story that when Chatham was at the Castle Inn, one of the greatest coaching houses of the old time, all the servants of the inn were ordered to array themselves in the Pitt livery! This, however, was not the fact, but merely a surmise occasioned by the number of servants Chatham carried about with him on his journeys.† When he reached London, Chatham was met by untoward news. On February 27th, the Land Tax, proposed at the usual rate of four shillings in the pound, had been reduced to three on the motion of Dowdeswell assisted by the country gentlemen of all parties, who naturally welcomed a relief to the land. It was the first time since the Revolution that a Ministry had been outvoted on a Money Bill, and Townshend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was blamed for his half-hearted support of his own measure. For his conduct over the Indian question, which was in declared opposition to the views of his chief, Town-

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 109.

† See Stanhope, *Hist. of Eng.*, v., 176, n.

shend was more severely blamed. On March 4th, Chatham wrote to Grafton, and it was the last effort of his will before it relapsed into strange inertia, that he and Townshend could not remain in office together; "or Mr. C. Townshend must amend his proceedings." * Townshend's office was offered to Lord North, but refused, and immediately afterwards Chatham's illness took a new form, "a suppressed gout falling upon his nerves," and his mind was overclouded by gloom and melancholy that rendered him utterly incapable of action or decision or advice. If another week had been spared to him, he would probably have got rid of Townshend, and the history of England and America might have been changed. "From this time Chatham became invisible," writes Grafton, "even to the Lord Chancellor and myself; and he desired to be allowed to attend solely to his health, until he found himself to be equal to any business. Here, in fact, was the end of his administration." †

The effacement of Chatham meant the rise of Townshend, who had all the aids which influence in the House of Commons can give. As Burke said, scarcely had one great luminary sunk beneath the western horizon than another appeared in the east, and was for his hour the lord of the ascendant. Talking to Grenville a fortnight after his escape from dismissal, Townshend jested about Chatham's invisibility. "He stated Lord Chatham in the most ridiculous light possible, showing how totally inaccessible he was; in a morning, not up; at noon, taking the

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 124. † *Ibid.*

air; in the evening, reposing, and not to be fatigued."* Realising that he no longer need fear the chief, and contemptuously disregarding others, Townshend exerted his brilliant talents to persuade the Commons to prolong the East Indian Company's monopoly and to raise a revenue from America. While the nominal leader lay ill at Hampstead, his policy as regards India was contemptuously set aside; as regards America it was recklessly reversed. Townshend was "the child of the House," as Burke said; he was sensitive to the slightest change in opinion; devoid of either principle or prejudice himself, he was an astute reader of prejudices in others and knew how to express a prejudice in dignified language, and give it the air of a principle. The charm of his wit and style, his exuberant spirits and brilliant talk, made him the mode and fashion of the hour. His character makes a striking contrast to that of Chatham; both men rose to power by means of eloquence, and their success illustrates the good and evil side of a political system in which ability to speak well is the most profitable talent. The one flattered, tricked, and cajoled, was everything by turns and nothing long; the other dominated the House, and depressed all rivals by haughty and imperious speech. But the result was the same, and influence with the Commons gave Townshend the power to control the Cabinet after Chatham deserted it, as it had given the older statesman power to force himself upon Newcastle.

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* *Grenville Papers*, iv., 220.

The Rockingham settlement of the American difficulty was threatened on two sides. In Great Britain, though repeal of the Stamp Act was popular at the time, a reaction against the Americans speedily set in, and the desire for a revenue from the colonies grew stronger; this view was supported with almost sinister persistence by George Grenville, and it was shared by the sovereign, the majority in Parliament, and a large section of the people. Among the colonists themselves, the outburst of gratitude that followed repeal spent itself quickly, and a spirit of general resistance to British authority began to show itself. It was inevitable that it should be so; the Stamp Act had raised the whole question of government, its repeal had shown how much might be effected by colonial opposition, and had created a delusive estimate of the number and strength of those who supported colonial views in Great Britain. The army which Grenville established in America was one great cause of discontent; the Americans obstinately declined to admit that it was necessary, and still more fervently declined to obey the Act that obliged them to provide the English troops with quarters, fire, and other necessaries. The Assembly of New York refused to obey the Mutiny Act which expressed this obligation, and as a consequence the power of the Assembly was suspended by Act of Parliament until the Mutiny Act should be complied with. That was regarded by the friends of America in England as a mild and conciliatory measure, and it was not without effect. It was upon the larger question of commercial regulation, and

the levying of external duties which was its basis, that more dangerous collision was threatened. Attempts to enforce the revenue acts were resisted with violence; the distinction between internal and external taxation so strenuously insisted upon when an internal tax was in question soon disappeared; the cry of "no representation, no taxation" was enlarged into "no representation, no legislation," and Dickinson in the *Farmer's Letters* argued, with perfect logic, though with a rather rapid forgetfulness of that acknowledgment of Parliament's legislative supremacy which had accompanied the protest against the Stamp Act, that "an Act of Parliament commanding to do a certain thing, if it has any validity, is a tax upon us for the expense that accrues in complying with it." How great an effect upon English opinion was created by the advance in American pretensions is clear from what Chatham, of all men the most inclined to defend and admire the colonists, wrote to Lord Shelburne on hearing of resistance to the Mutiny Act and of the objections taken to the commercial regulations.

"America affords a gloomy prospect. A spirit of infatuation has taken possession of New York: their disobedience to the Mutiny Act will *justly* make a great ferment here, open a fair field to the arraigners here, and leave no room to any to say a word in their defence. I foresee confusion will ensue. The petition of the merchants of New York is highly improper: in point of time most absurd; in the extent of their pretensions, most excessive; and in the reasoning most grossly fallacious and offensive. . . . . They are doing the work of

their worst enemies themselves. The torrent of indignation in Parliament will, I apprehend, become irresistible, and they will draw upon their heads national resentment by their ingratitude, and ruin, I fear upon the whole state, by the consequence." *

Again, four days later, he wrote: "It is a literal truth to say that the Stamp Act, of most unhappy memory, has frightened these irritable and umbrageous people quite out of their senses." † He advised that the New York petition should be laid before the House, and not be smothered in the hands of the King's servants.

It is clear, if Chatham blamed American infatuation, how incensed and outraged must have been that large number of politicians who had never sympathised with the colonists. Townshend perceived this, and determined to raise a revenue by duties on articles imported into the colonies, which duties were to be collected at the American ports. The articles selected were paper, tea, glass, lead, and painters' colours, and it was estimated the new duties would produce forty thousand pounds a year, which would enable the Crown to pay the salaries of Governors and Judges, and so render those officers independent of the Assemblies. A Board of Commissioners was appointed by the Crown to superintend the trade laws, and the writs of assistance were formally legalised. At the same time Townshend, following Grenville, freed tea, coffee, and cocoa, which were sent to America *via* England, from the import duty

* *Chatham Corr.*, iii., 188, 189. † *Ibid.*, iii., 193.

into England, with the result that the colonists actually bought these articles more cheaply than Englishmen. There was a superficial cleverness in seizing upon the difference between external and internal taxation, but the policy combined the most irritating and provocative qualities with an almost ludicrous want of financial ingenuity. If the duties had been levied at the English port of embarkation, they would probably have been paid without demur. Political unwisdom never risked greater disasters for so small a benefit, or hazarded a nobler empire for so penurious a revenue.

Townshend carried his budget in May, two months after Chatham's breakdown. During these months both Shelburne and Grafton, though they differed from one another, earnestly sought the aid and advice of their absent chief. To their entreaties, George III. added his own, yet all were in vain. Chatham sent his proxy to Grafton for use in the Lords,* but repeated that he could see no one on business. On May 30th, the King was so alarmed by small majorities of six and three on previous days in the House of Lords, that he wrote to Chatham, almost imploring him to see Grafton.

"Your duty and affection for my person, your own honour, call on you to make an effort: five minutes' conversation with you would raise his spirits, for his heart is good; mine, I thank Heaven, wants no rousing: my love to my country, as well as what I owe to my own character and to my family, prompt me not to yield to faction." †

* Anson's *Grafton*, p. 133. † *Chatham Corr.*, iii., 261.

To this, Chatham replied: "Penetrated and overwhelmed with your Majesty's letter and the boundless extent of your royal goodness, totally incapable as illness renders me, I obey your Majesty's commands, and shall beg to see the Duke of Grafton to-morrow." The following day, Grafton went out to Hampstead, and his memoirs contain his account of the interview.

"Though I expected to find Lord Chatham very ill indeed, his situation was different from what I had imagined; his nerves and spirits were affected to a dreadful degree; and the sight of his great mind bowed down, and thus weakened by disorder, would have filled me with grief and concern, even if I had not borne a sincere attachment to his person and character. The confidence he reposed in me, demanded every return on my part; and it appeared like cruelty in me to have been urged by any necessity to put a man I valued to so great suffering as it was evident that my commission exacted. The interview was truly painful: I had to run over the many difficulties of the Session: for his lordship, I believe, had not once attended the House, since his last return from Bath. I had to relate the struggles we had experienced . . . the opposition also which we had encountered in the East India business from Mr. Conway, as well as Mr. Townshend; together with the unaccountable conduct of this latter gentleman, who had suffered himself to be led to pledge himself at last, contrary to the known decision of every member of the Cabinet, to draw a certain revenue from the Colonies without offence to the Americans themselves: and I was sorry to inform Lord Chatham that Mr. Townshend's flippant boasting was received with strong marks

of a blind and greedy approbation from the body of the House."

Chatham entreated Grafton himself to remain, assured him that Shelburne was loyal, which both George III. and Grafton doubted, and advised him if a junction with the Bedfords or Rockinghams became necessary, to negotiate with the former.* This preference for the Bedfords, who were passionate in their hostility to the Americans, is one of the strangest features in Chatham's opinions and career.

This was his last official intervention in politics; he did not see Grafton again for two years, he had no part or lot in the administration, and only retained office because the King told him his name kept the Ministry together. The mysterious malady grew worse; he would remain all day seated at a table with his head bowed and his face covered; the slightest noise racked his nerves, and the very mention of politics so agitated him that his whole body trembled. Nearly forty years later, when he could look back over those momentous events that sprang from the acts of this year, Grafton, who knew ministerial politics at this time better than any other man, wrote: "I shall ever consider Lord Chatham's illness, together with his resignation, as the most unhappy event that could have befallen our political state. . . . I must think that the separation from America might have been avoided." †

* Anson's *Grafton*, pp. 136–138. † *Ibid.*, 225.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OPPOSITION TO PREROGATIVE.

1770–1772.

CHATHAM remained withdrawn from public life for more than two years. In January, 1768, he desired to resign his office, but the King wrote to him: "I am thoroughly convinced of the utility you are of to my service; for though confined to your house, your name has been sufficient to enable my administration to proceed. I therefore in the most earnest manner, call on you to continue in your employment."* The Privy Seal was put into commission for nine weeks, but it was not until October 14, 1768, that Chatham's resignation was accepted. The King, Grafton, and Camden entreated him to remain, and George III. wrote, "As you entered upon employment in August, 1766, at my own requisition, I think I have a right *to insist* on your remaining in my service; for I with pleasure look forward to the time of your recovery, when I may have your assistance in resisting the torrent of Factions this country so much

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 318.

labours under."* Even this failed to move the Minister, who never again took arms for the King against the "torrent of Factions." The dismissal of Lord Shelburne, and the removal of Sir Jeffrey Amherst from the Governorship of Virginia, were mentioned by Chatham to Grafton as matters he disapproved, and the paramount power which the Bedford connection had by this date secured in the administration cannot have been a pleasing object of contemplation. During the spring of 1769 his powers returned to him, the cloud of gloom that had so long depressed his mind was dissipated, and he signalised his return to active life by a visit to St. James's, which created many surmises and conjectures, and no inconsiderable alarm, among the political classes. It was a different world from that which he had left, and the various connections, conscious that Chatham's personality, a force of known power though of uncertain tendency, must affect the equilibrium of parties, waited with some anxiety for a declaration of his purpose. Immediately after resigning the Privy Seal he had been reconciled with Lord Temple, who at this moment was delighting in the unusual opportunities of intrigue, patriotism, and agitation afforded by the struggle between Wilkes and the House of Commons. Temple, as he once candidly stated, loved faction and had money to spare; he was a great master in the art of creating a boisterous public opinion, and though he did not direct the whirlwind, he rode triumphantly in its midst. He rejoiced that the animating eloquence

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 343.

of Chatham might again be heard in Parliament, and might yet further increase the popular excitement.

Grafton was still head of a Government whose measures he almost invariably disapproved, whose members were uncongenial; his intellect was too keen to ignore mistakes, but his will was too weak to coerce a colleague, his nature too indolent to frame a policy. From a desire to oblige the King, he retained office, and justified his ministerial existence to himself and to his son on the ground that he was marking time until Chatham should return. The complexion of the Ministry was changed, and only Grafton, Granby, and Camden remained as the representatives of Lord Chatham's friends; Charles Townshend was dead, and Lord North ruled the Treasury in his stead, Northington and Conway had resigned, though the latter remained in the Cabinet without office until January, 1770. Shelburne had been in effect dismissed. There was a moment in 1767 when a general combination of parties seemed possible, when Bedford and Rockingham met to decide upon a division of offices that might conciliate all sections; but the two chiefs split upon the question of who should lead the Commons, Rockingham declaring for Conway, and Bedford announcing that he and Mr. Grenville were one. In those negotiations it is worthy of remark that Rockingham "was more against Lord Chatham than against any other." * At the close of 1767, places were found for Gower, Weymouth, who became Secretary of State, and Sandwich, so that a compact body of

* *Grenville Papers*, iv., 66.

the Bedfords obtained an entrance into the Government, while a newly created Secretaryship for America was given to Lord Hillsborough. Shelburne was wholly at variance with these new colleagues on grounds of policy, as with Grafton on personal grounds; he was goaded into resignation in October, 1768, and was succeeded by Lord Rochford. The Ministry as then constituted was not out of sympathy with the obstinate assertion of prerogative, the manipulation of constitutional forms into instruments of the royal will, which was the absorbing passion of George III. at this time. The King was still "the most efficient man among them," as Mansfield had declared him to be in 1767, and the clue to the confused struggle between the Commons and the people, as well as to events connected with America, is to be found in the stubborn determination of the sovereign. Mansfield in these years was the confidential adviser of the throne; his luminous mind evolved arguments on behalf of many bad causes; he was in fact the only politician of great intellect who could be found to oppose the cause of Chatham and Burke, and was treasured accordingly. Talking to Lyttleton at the end of 1767, he said that "unless that *madman* Chatham should come and throw a fire-ball in the midst of them, he thought Ministers would stand their ground." It is not difficult to imagine with what feelings he received the news of Chatham's recovery in 1769. The sentiments of the Rockingham Whigs are shown by the famous sarcasm of Burke: "If he has not been sent for (to the levée), Chatham went only humbly to lay

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STATUE OF LORD MANSFIELD, ST. STEPHEN'S HALL, WESTMINSTER.

BY E. H. BAILEY, R.A.

a reprimand at the feet of his most gracious master, and to talk some significant pompous creeping explanatory matter in the true Chathamic style, and that's all."* In his interview, which was the last that took place between Chatham and himself, the King was very gracious, but Chatham took occasion to declare his dissent from some proceedings of the Ministry, especially in regard to Wilkes and to the East India Company.

"His lordship added that he doubted whether his health would ever again allow him to attend Parliament, but if it did, and if he should give his dissent to any measure, that His Majesty would be indulgent enough to believe that it would not arise from any personal consideration, for he protested to His Majesty, as Lord Chatham he had not a tittle to find fault with in the conduct of any one individual; and that His Majesty might be assured that it could not arise from ambition, as he felt so strongly the weak state from which he was recovering, and which might daily threaten him, that office therefore of any sort could no longer be desirable to him."

Happy would it have been if the King had remembered this conversation, and had believed that the words of warning which fell from Chatham's lips were more worthy of attention because they came from a man who had already won the highest distinction the State could offer, and was forbidden by age and infirmity to think again of office or reward. These last years of Chatham's life were full of strenuous resistance, of a passionate and splendid oratory

* *Rockingham Memoirs*, ii., 140.

that was exerted in vain, of an opposition unavailing indeed for its immediate ends but so true in its aims and methods to the deepest truths of politics, so noble in its display of energy and power, so pathetic in its closing scene, that it must be ever remembered as an achievement illustrating the history of Parliament. But this resistance was an effort that George III. could not forgive, and whatever liking he possessed for Chatham passed rapidly into suspicion and dread, until before a decade was ended, it was transformed into a sinister hatred.

Notwithstanding Burke's disparagement, it was with the Rockingham party that Chatham now entered into alliance, an alliance that was never very cordial, although it continued, in form at least, until the eve of his death. The Duke of Portland wrote to Rockingham on December 3, 1769, an account of an interview some politician had obtained with Chatham, which details a very characteristic picture.

"He found him just recovered from an attack of the gout, but high in spirits, and *in fury*. He, Lord Chatham, said that he was *domestically* happy, but that public affairs were too blank to give anybody comfort; that the conduct of some persons in Administration had surprised him; that he knows not what infatuation has produced such a situation of affairs. He says that he united body and soul with Lord Rockingham and Sir George Savile *in their measures* (meaning, I suppose, the Middlesex election); that he thinks Sir George the most virtuous character in this country, and bows to his *constitutional and private integrity;* that he will go hand in hand with Lord Rockingham and his friends, who are,

and have proved themselves to be, the only true Whigs in this country. '*Former little differences must be forgotten when the contest is pro aris et focis.* The preparations of France and Spain are truly alarming. But, Sir, if they were to land on the coast of Sussex to-morrow, we will not stir a step to oppose them, till this deep wound in our constitution is healed. Sir, I had rather be a slave to France than to a fellow subject.' 'Then, my Lord,' said the visitor, 'I suppose you think the Parliament may probably be dissolved?' 'May, sir? It must, it shall be dissolved.'" *

It was as a struggle *pro aris et focis* that Chatham entered into Opposition; he regarded any attempt to supersede constitutional liberty with fiery and passionate indignation, and his utterances against such a policy, extreme though they were, never went further than the action he was prepared, if necessary, to take. His strenuous eloquence and unconventional proposals often alarmed and disconcerted Rockingham, whose mind was of correct and moderate tone. The archetypal Whig shuddered at any hint of revolution, whereas Chatham would have mounted a barricade. To apply the phrase of Heine, Rockingham loved liberty as his wedded wife, to whom he owed a decorous conjugal respect, but to Chatham liberty was a mistress, the dedicated object of an ardent passion. This difference of temperament was at the bottom of many disagreements, and each leader showed the defects of his qualities at various times. Chatham was sullen under the moderation of Rockingham, and declared that he

* *Rockingham Memoirs*, ii., 143.

would be "a scarecrow of violence among the gentle warblers of the grove." No phrase could more exactly express the impression which he produced upon the Whigs. There were other causes of interrupted harmony, but, notwithstanding all such difficulties, the aims of the Rockinghams and of Chatham, in regard to both America and domestic questions, were so nearly identical that the alliance was never formally broken.

In this connection one incident which brings two great names into conjunction must be mentioned. Burke published, in 1770, his famous pamphlet on the *Present Discontents*, which was a glowing eulogy on the Rockinghamites, an implied censure on Chatham, and an explicit condemnation of George Grenville, who was compared to the Spirit of Envy. At this moment Rockingham, Chatham, and Grenville were endeavouring to unite themselves in Opposition, and the admirable invective of Burke was unlikely to promote a warm friendship between Grenville and Burke's patron. Chatham wrote to Rockingham a letter of remonstrance, in which he said that the pamphlet had done much hurt to the cause. In an honest Opposition it is highly fit that there should be a variety of opinions, but "in the wide and extensive public, the whole alone can save the whole against the desperate designs of the Court." More than twenty years later Burke saw this letter again, and endorsed on the back of it a vitriolic note. "I remember to have seen this knavish letter at the time. The pamphlet is itself, by anticipation, an answer to that grand artificer of fraud. *He* would not

like it. It is pleasant to hear *him* talk of the *great extensive public*, who never conversed but with a parcel of toad-eaters. Alas! alas! how different the *real* from the ostensible public man! Must all this theatrical stuffing and raised heels be necessary for the character of a great man?" Then follows the characteristic reaction against so violent an outbreak. "Oh! but this does not derogate from his great, splendid side, God forbid!"* Chatham's failings were peculiarly irritating to Burke, and though he was conscious of the other's greatness and celebrated it in some passages of noble praise, Burke's influence undoubtedly tended to prevent a complete understanding and union between Chatham and Rockingham.

Chatham was eager for the fray and attended in the House of Lords when Parliament met in January, 1770. The great question of the hour was that of the Middlesex election, and Chatham's speeches produced an immediate effect. Camden made a dramatic recantation of all responsibility for what the Ministry had done in regard to both America and the Middlesex election, and his resignation of the seals became imperative. Lord Granby joined in this protest, and also resigned. Thus the two most popular Ministers, who had never wavered in their allegiance to Chatham's principles, though their conduct towards Chatham himself had not been so plainly loyal as that of Shelburne, returned to his side and Grafton was left in solitude among the Bedfords. After some attempts to fill the

**Rockingham Memoirs*, ii., 193–195.

vacant places he himself resigned, Lord North became chief Minister, and the administration assumed the definitive shape which it retained till Chatham's death. Of all the administrations throughout his reign this was most clearly ruled by George III.; it was the King's friends who gave Lord North his majority, it was the King's will that kept Lord North faithful to a policy which in secret he disliked and distrusted. The sovereign's narrow mind, the Minister's complaisance, the native insolence of Sandwich and Weymouth stamped their characteristics upon the Government which was destined to confront the gravest crisis in the history of the British Empire.

Many important constitutional questions were agitated at this time. At the general election of 1768, Wilkes had returned to his career as a practical politician, and had been elected as one of the members for Middlesex. It will be remembered that on his flight to France he had been outlawed, and this outlawry was now reversed by Mansfield on a technical point. Wilkes, however, had been condemned for sedition, libel, and blasphemy, and on surrendering to receive sentence upon this charge he was ordered to pay £1000 and to be imprisoned for twenty-one months. He was more than ever a popular favourite, and his imprisonment produced many riots in London, notably one in St. George's Fields, where some Scottish soldiers accidentally killed an innocent man. This incident created much indignation and disorder, the greater because Scottish soldiers were implicated. Weymouth, the Sec-

retary of State, had before the riot written to the magistrates urging them not to hesitate about employing the military, and Wilkes secured a copy of this letter which he published with a characteristic preface charging Weymouth with having planned and determined upon the massacre of St. George's Fields. George III., at the beginning of the new Parliament, had written Lord North that "the expulsion of Mr. Wilkes appears to be highly expedient and must be effected," and the Minister resolved to take advantage of this publication of Weymouth's letter and make it a ground for expulsion. Wilkes was summoned to the bar; he admitted and gloried in the preface to Weymouth's letter, which was determined by resolution of the House to be an "insolent libel." The House then assumed the functions of a judicial court, and declared that Wilkes, being guilty of libel in the famous No. 45, of blasphemy in publishing the *Essay on Woman*, and of libel against Lord Weymouth, should be expelled from the House. Technically the House of Commons were infringing no principle of law in decreeing the expulsion, though they were contravening policy and common-sense, but after the expulsion Wilkes was re-elected for Middlesex, and the House then resolved that, having been expelled, Wilkes was incapable of being returned to the same Parliament. This imposed a positive disqualification on Wilkes, and disfranchisement on the freeholders of Middlesex, measures involving an alteration of the law which could only legally be accomplished by Act of Parliament, not by a resolution of either House.

Wilkes was again re-elected unanimously, and again his incapacity was declared. At length a way out of the difficulty was discovered; Colonel Luttrell opposed Wilkes, received 296 votes to 1143 given for Wilkes, and was solemnly declared by the Commons to be the duly elected member for Middlesex. This gross breach of the legal rights of electors created the wildest excitement in London and throughout the country. Immediately after Luttrell's election Parliament was adjourned, but throughout the recess the popular protest gained strength, and when Chatham spoke on the subject in the House of Lords he was conscious that public opinion supported his views.

The debate in the Lords was a brilliant duel between Chatham and Mansfield, and there is no other speech of Chatham's which displays so great a power of close and subtle reasoning. His first speech concluded with an amendment to the address by which the House was asked to take into serious consideration the causes of the discontent in so many parts of his Majesty's dominions, and

"particularly the late proceedings of the House of Commons, touching the incapacity of John Wilkes, Esq., expelled by that House, to be elected as a member to serve in this present Parliament, thereby refusing, by a resolution of one branch of the legislature only, to the subject his common right, and depriving the electors of Middlesex of their free choice of a representative."

Mansfield opposed the amendment. With an affectation of mystery that was a constant peculiarity of

his character, he declared that his own opinion whether the proceedings of the Commons were legal or not "should be locked up in his own breast, or should die with him"; but he argued that such House of Parliament was the sole judge of its own privileges, that any question touching the seat of a member in the Lower House could only be determined by that House, that there could be no appeal from this decision, and that it was an infringement of the Commons' privileges for the Lords to inquire into proceedings with respect to members of the House of Commons. "Wherever the statute law was silent, he knew not where to look for the law of Parliament, or for a definition of the privileges of either House, except in the proceedings and decisions of each House respectively." If the Commons have erred, there is no remedy except a new Act of Parliament. Chatham spoke again in reply to Mansfield: "Nothing less than the genius of penetration could have discovered any obscurity in his amendment. . . . What is this mysterious power, undefined by law, unknown to the subject, which we must not approach without awe, nor speak of without reverence, which no man may question, and to which all men must submit?" If there is no law to direct the House of Commons but their own wisdom, if their decision is law, we have but exchanged the arbitrary power of a King for the arbitrary power of a House of Commons.

"Tyranny is detestable in every shape; but in none so formidable as when it is assumed and exercised by a number of tyrants. But we have a law of Parliament,

we have a code in which every honest man may find it. We have a Magna Charta, we have the Statute Book, and the Bill of Rights."

The decision of the House of Commons makes the representative the constituent body; it is contrary to Magna Charta because it deprives the elector of his freehold vote without either the judgment of his peers or the law of the land. This argument was enforced by a famous passage of eloquence, in which the silken barons of the day were adjured to imitate the iron barons of Runnymede.*

Chatham afterwards adopted Mansfield's advice and brought in a Bill, reciting those resolutions passed by the House of Commons which stated the incapacity of Wilkes and the return of Luttrell, and declaring "That all the adjudications contained in the above-mentioned several resolutions are arbitrary and illegal, and the same are and shall be hereby reversed, annulled, and made void to all intents and purposes whatsoever." † The Lords rejected the second reading by eighty-nine to forty-three. He also moved for an address to the King praying for an immediate dissolution, on the ground that the people had lost their confidence in the House of Commons. This motion had been the object of correspondence between Rockingham and himself, and Rockingham expressed the opinion that it "was not particularly called for," and that his friends would not welcome it. Chatham replied that the idea of moving it sprang more from

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 383, n. This speech is one of those reported by Sir Philip Francis.

† *Ibid.*, iii., 449-451.

himself than from the suggestion of others. "I think it for our honour, and in prudence indispensable, to seek every occasion to let the people see we demand dissolution, and the Crown know, by perpetual reiteration, that we will never acquiesce without it."* No record of the debate has been preserved, but the motion was negatived without a division. How far it is constitutional to move for a dissolution in the Lords is a question that might tempt a casuist, but the motion was an illustration of Chatham's favourite theory that the Lords are the hereditary councillors of the throne, and may advise the Crown on any matter. The Crown, it is at least certain, is under no obligation to adopt any advice that may be so offered.

In the many debates which followed on this subject Chatham's powers of invective were displayed with a touch of extravagance. The question in fact had been thoroughly argued, and the subsequent speeches were intended to arouse popular opinion, to intimidate Ministers rather than to convince them. But when Grafton had resigned there was no prominent man in the administration whose conscience was easily aroused, who could be accused of either scruple or timidity. The House of Lords was not awed by Chatham as the Commons had been awed by Pitt, although this struggle brought forth some of his most famous utterances. These were characterised by passion, impetuosity, and utter lack of caution or reserve, and at times it must be confessed by recklessness of statement and abuse. "If the breach

* *Chatham Corr.*, 455–457; *Rockingham Memoirs*, ii., 181–184.

in the constitution be effectually repaired, the people will of themselves return to a state of tranquillity — if not — may discord prevail for ever" — so he exclaimed with a monarch's voice. "Rather than the nation should surrender their birthright to a despotic Minister, I hope, my Lords, old as I am, I shall see the question brought to issue, and fairly tried between the people and Government." On another occasion he quoted Lord Somers and Chief Justice Holt, and drew their characters very finely. He called them honest men, who knew and loved the English Constitution. Then, turning to Lord Mansfield, he said with a sneer, "I vow to God I think the noble Lord equals them both in abilities." Mansfield in fact was the object of Chatham's particular attention, and a story is told by Grattan that illustrates the directness of Chatham's personal attacks, and also that disregard of the rules of order in which no other member of Parliament ever equalled him. "Who," he asked, "are the evil advisers of his Majesty? I would say to them, Is it you? Is it you? Is it you? (pointing to the Ministers, until he came near Lord Mansfield). There were several Lords around him, and Lord Chatham said, "My Lords, please to take your seats." When they had sat down, he pointed to Lord Mansfield, and said, "Is it you? *Methinks Felix trembles.*"

It was in his adoption of the Bute legend that Chatham's speeches displayed some symptoms of an unbalanced mind. Recounting the failure of his last Ministry, he declared that he had been duped, that some secret influence was at work dividing

his colleagues one from the other, that from his Majesty he had received nothing but kindness, but that there was a power behind the throne greater than the throne itself. "Who has not heard of the Mazarinade of France?" Mazarin had still governed France though exiled from the French Court, and Bute, he hinted, was still exercising his baneful and malignant influence, still poisoning the mind of Majesty. This extraordinary belief was held by many others besides Chatham, but in the innumerable papers relating to the politics of that time there is little evidence that Bute's influence over the King continued, and there is abundant evidence that the sovereign himself was the fountain and origin of much that was attributed to Bute. The admirers of the George III. who confronted Napoleon would willingly accept the theory that the George III. who lost America was but the creature of a designing Minister, but unhappily no grounds for that belief can be discovered. Chatham believed that Bute sold England at the peace, but no credible evidence for that grave charge was ever given, though Camden continued till the end of his life to repeat it. The constant intrigues among politicians of the eighteenth century naturally induced a habit of suspicion, and the simplest actions were examined as if they were subtle and tortuous plots. In this respect Chatham was the man of his age. He decorated a negotiation for office with the pomp of diplomacy, and conducted a conversation with the circumspection of an intrigue. This trick of suspicion, which is usually the characteristic of small minds,

was the feature of Chatham's character to which his acceptance of the Bute legend must be ascribed.

If this feature of Chatham's character cannot be overlooked by any biographer, it must be remembered that in his case it was compatible with the keenest sagacity in the sphere of practical affairs. He possessed the valuable instinct of scenting difficulties ahead, the power so indispensable to politicians of judging a proposal not only on abstract merits, but in the light of the effects its acceptance will produce. Like Walpole, he had refused to tax the American colonies. When Lord George Sackville declined to charge at Minden, George II. pressed for his expulsion from the House of Commons, but Pitt pointed out that, if he were re-elected, the House would be placed in a very difficult position, and declined to adopt the King's suggestion. This Grafton rightly instanced as an illustration of political foresight. Chatham's opinions on the contest between the House of Commons and the printers are a further proof of his possession of this quality. He admitted that the House was within its rights in committing certain printers who had reported its proceedings, but he did not share the opinion that reporting could be to the detriment of the Commons. "Where is the injury, if the members act upon honest principles? For a public assembly to be afraid of having their deliberations published is monstrous, and speaks for itself." But when in the subsequent dispute with the City the Lord Mayor condemned the messenger of the House of Commons, who had arrested one of the printers within the precincts without obtain-

ing the signature of a magistrate to the Speaker's warrant, as the charter provided must be done to make an arrest in the City legal, Chatham's view of the situation was an essentially practical one. He thought the Lord Mayor censurable for interference with the servant of the House of Commons, even though he were defending the charter, but "to go further than *bruta parliamentaria fulmina*, noise without effect, would be neither wise nor becoming." The majority of the House thought differently from Chatham and they committed the Lord Mayor to the tower, though they carefully refrained from attacking Wilkes, who was the true instigator of the city measures. Ministers had in fact, as Chatham truly said, "brought themselves and their master where ordinary inability never arrives, and nothing but first-rate geniuses in incapacity can reach; I mean, a situation wherein there is nothing they can do which is not a fault." * Fortunately the salutary rule that prisoners committed by the House are freed when the session ends rescued the House from their dilemma, and the Lord Mayor was prevented through his release from becoming an even more dangerous martyr than Wilkes himself. The Commons went so far as to expunge the statement of their messenger being admitted to bail by the Lord Mayor from the record of the City Court. This, said Chatham, was the act of a mob and not of a Parliament.

Naturally enough, the tyrannising exercise of their power by the Commons, and the riotous discontent and confusion it produced in London and the country

* *Chatham Correspondence.*, iv., 119.

at large, turned the minds of men to various political remedies for a Parliamentary constitution that appeared disgraced. Chatham eagerly canvassed most of the remedies suggested. The House of Commons, he said, had converted government into a scuffle with a single individual; they had become both odious and contemptible.

"The influence of the Crown is become so enormous, that some stronger bulwark must be erected for the defence of the constitution. The act for constituting septennial Parliaments must be repealed. Formerly the inconveniences attending short Parliaments had great weight with me; but now we are not debating upon a question of inconvenience: our all is at stake; our whole constitution is giving way; and therefore, with the most deliberate and solemn conviction, I declare myself a convert to triennial Parliaments."

This was an important declaration, as it brought Chatham more closely into touch with the democratic wing of the Opposition, to whose organisation in 1769 as the supporters of the Bill of Rights Mr. Lecky traces the origin of English Radicalism. It must, however, be read in connection with the plan for Parliamentary reform which Chatham advocated, and read in that connection the great difference separating him from the democrats is clear. They believed in what was then called personal representation, which involved sooner or later universal suffrage, but Chatham never adopted that idea. "Representation is not of person but of property, and in this light there is scarcely a blade of grass

which is not represented."* "The share of the national burdens, which any part of the kingdom bears, is the only rule by which we can judge of the weight that it ought to have in the political balance."† His plan was to add to the county representation by giving an extra member to each county, in order that the great popular constituencies might gain at the expense of the small boroughs, which in 1766 he described as "the rotten part of our constitution, that cannot continue a century. If it does not drop, it must be amputated." In his speech on January 22, 1770, Chatham entered fully into this plan, and the cautious and conservative manner in which he now approached the problem is clearly exemplified in the statement that the rotten boroughs must be considered the natural infirmity of the Constitution, which must be borne in patience. "The limb is mortified but the amputation might be death." He could not cure that disorder, but he would infuse a portion of new health into the Constitution; the representation of the counties is still preserved pure and uncorrupted: "it is not in the little dependent boroughs, it is in the great cities and counties that the strength and vigour of the constitution resides, and by them alone, if an unhappy question should ever arise, will the constitution be honestly and firmly defended."‡ By way of maintaining the terms of the Union, Chatham proposed to add proportionately to the county representation of Scotland, although the county franchise

* *Letters to Henry Flood*, p. 15.

† *Chatham Corr.*, iv., 169.

‡ *Ibid.*, iii., 406, 407.

in that country consisted in "superiorities," which were bought and sold in the market, and were enjoyed independently of property or residence.* In England the county franchise was the forty-shillings freehold, and Chatham's scheme would certainly have infused new health, but it was by no means a complete remedy for the disease, as at the close of the century 371 members for England and Wales out of 513 were returned as nominees, and the addition of one free member for each county could have produced little effect upon this general result. The most remarkable defect in the plan was its failure to grant any representation for the great modern towns such as Manchester or Birmingham, and the real value of the scheme consists in the fact that it was the pioneer attempt to touch the problem, and assisted to educate opinion. Chatham could be quoted as one who believed that the political machinery of the Constitution needed alteration, that the excellence of administration was dependent to some extent upon the form of government, and in this respect he was nearer to the doctrinaire Liberalism of the nineteenth century, and of the seventeenth, than Edmund Burke. But Chatham, like Burke, regarded the Constitution as it emerged from the struggles of the seventeenth century as the ideal system of government ; for him, too, the system of balanced powers, of checks and equipoises and adjustments, was an object of reverence. In enlarging the popular representation he desired to restore to the people their control over the House of Commons.

* May, *Constitutional History*, i., 355.

FROM THE PAINTING BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"Whoever understands the theory of the English constitution, and will compare it with the fact, must see at once how widely they differ. We must reconcile them to each other, if we wish to save the liberties of this country; we must reduce our political practice, as nearly as possible, to our principles. The constitution intended that there should be a permanent relation between the constituent and representative body of the people. Will any man affirm, that, as the House of Commons is now formed, that relation is in any degree preserved? My Lords, it is not preserved, it is destroyed."

Burke and Chatham were at one in their desire for administrative reform, and in their belief that the end of government is the good of the people. But Burke held that "our representation is as nearly perfect as the necessary imperfection of human affairs and of human creatures will suffer it to be," and his disregard for the mechanical theory of representation is shown in his famous question, Warwick has members — is it more opulent, happy, and free than Birmingham, which is unrepresented? The one positive reform carried in this period was George Grenville's Election Act, which transferred from the whole House to a specially chosen committee the duty of deciding disputed elections, and this was warmly supported by both Chatham and Burke.

Another question on which they were agreed was the relief of Protestant Dissenters from subscribing the Thirty-Nine Articles in order to secure the benefits of the Toleration Act. A Bill with this object passed the Commons in 1772 but was rejected by the

Lords. Chatham supported it, and, in 1790, Burke quoted a well-known sentence from this speech addressed to the episcopal bench: "The dissenting ministers are represented as men of close ambition: they are so, my Lords; and their ambition is to keep close to the College of Fishermen, not of cardinals, and to the doctrine of inspired apostles not to the decrees of interested and aspiring bishops: they contend for a spiritual creed and spiritual worship; we have a Calvinist creed, a Popish liturgy, and an Arminian clergy." Chatham, added Burke, was always regarded as the protector of the Dissenters. Unfortunately, his toleration stopped short, like that of Milton, when it was a question of the Roman Catholic religion, and he was strongly opposed to the establishment of that religion in Canada. The wisdom of that establishment has been demonstrated by events, but it was fiercely attacked at the time both by the Opposition and by the American colonists, and in the popular comparison of the day, George III. was said to resemble Charles I. in showing a dangerous partiality for the Roman religion. The action of the Ministers in thus recognising the religious belief of the French Canadians showed a wisdom in startling contrast to their ordinary conduct, and an immediate reward was reaped in the retention of Canada when the British colonies were lost.

English foreign policy during this period followed no consistent plan. The desertion of Frederick left Great Britain without an ally in Europe, and notwithstanding her dominant position in 1763, her

influence on the course of European affairs was very slight. Choiseul and Grimaldi could make their preparations against England without fear of any other enemy. Choiseul, in 1768, purchased Corsica and England did not move, although the incident created the indignation always aroused among Englishmen by the increase of any foreign empire. The idea of an alliance with the Corsican patriots had been suggested during the late war,* and Chatham expressed to Boswell very high opinions of Paoli, their leader. His view of the French purchase of Corsica was clearly expressed.

"I cannot agree that nothing less than an immediate attack upon the honour and interest of this nation can authorise us to interfere in defence of weaker states, and in stopping the enterprise of an ambitious neighbour. Whenever that narrow, selfish policy has prevailed in our councils, we have constantly experienced the fatal effects of it. By suffering our natural enemies to oppress the powers less able than we are to make a resistance, we have permitted them to increase their strength, we have lost the most favourable opportunities of opposing them with success. . . . With respect to Corsica, France has obtained a more useful and important acquisition in one pacific campaign than in any of her belligerent campaigns; at least while I had the honour of administering the war against her."

Spain endeavoured in 1770 to win a similar advantage over the Falkland Islands without the expense of purchase, by expelling a small English

* *Chatham Correspondence*, i., 242.

force which for four years had been in possession of the islands. Chatham, by a curious coincidence, had predicted that a "blow of hostility" from France and Spain would fall at the moment he was speaking, in May, 1770, when preparations were being made by Spain for the expedition.* News of the aggression reached London in October, and the Ministers at once demanded from Spain restitution of the islands. Chatham believed that it was the opening incident of a new war, and he was justified in so believing, as war was only averted by the decline of Choiseul's influence in France. "My Minister wishes for war, but I do not," wrote Louis to the Spanish King, and it was not till Choiseul had fallen that the Spanish Court disavowed the expedition and restored the English settlement. The question was debated in the Lords in November, 1770, and Chatham delivered one of his greatest speeches.† The possibility of war at once made him the centre of universal attention, and elicited his full powers. Nothing is more characteristic of him, it may be observed, than the series of compliments in this speech to great men of the past, to Carteret, who in the upper department of government had not his equal; to Oliver Cromwell, who astonished mankind by his intelligence, "who did not derive his information from spies in the Cabinet of every prince in Europe, but drew it from the cabinet of his own sagacious mind"; and to Lord Anson, "to whose wisdom, experience, and care the nation owes the glo-

* Thackeray's *Life of Chatham*, ii., 197.

† *Chatham Correspondence*, iv., 2.

rious naval victories of the last war." Holding the view that war was inevitable, Chatham charged the Ministry with neglecting the navy, and laid down the principles of naval defence which ought to govern English statesmen. The first of these indispensable objects was "such a sufficient naval force at home, that even the united fleets of France and Spain may never be masters of the channel"; the second a powerful western squadron, to protect the colonies and commerce; the third, "such a force in the Bay of Gibraltar as may be sufficient to cover that garrison, to watch the motions of the Spaniards and to keep open communication with Minorca." In order to raise men for the navy press-gangs had been at work, and certain of the city authorities, among them Wilkes, had attempted to prevent the pressing of men within the city limits. This action had been very popular, but Chatham believed that pressing was necessary and was founded upon uninterrupted usage. "I wholly condemn their conduct, and am ready to support any motion that may be made for bringing those aldermen who have endeavoured to stop the execution of the Admiralty warrants to the bar of this House. . . . My opinion may not be very popular; neither am I running the race of popularity." * On the immediate question of the islands he declared that war was inevitable, though he desired an honourable peace, and he concluded with words of warning to the Ministers.

"They are now balancing between a war which they ought to have foreseen, but for which they have made no

* See also *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 480, 485.

provision, and an ignominious compromise. Let me warn them of their danger. If they are forced into a war, they stand it at the hazard of their heads. If, by an ignominious compromise, they should stain the honour of the Crown, or sacrifice the rights of the people, let them look to their consciences, and consider whether they will be able to walk the streets in safety."

The compliance of Spain rescued Ministers from their dilemma, and they gained the credit of having secured their object by peaceable means. Dr. Johnson in his pamphlet on the question powerfully attacked Chatham, and made what was, from his point of view, a singularly apt quotation from Corneille. The facts, argued this stout enemy of all enemies of the King, were "a sufficient answer to the feudal gabble of a man who is every day lessening that splendour of character which once illuminated the kingdom, then dazzled, and afterwards inflamed it; and for whom it will be happy if the nation shall at last dismiss him to nameless obscurity, with that equipoise of blame and praise which Corneille allows to Richelieu, a man who, I think, had much of his merit, and many of his faults.

"Chacun parle à son gré de ce grand cardinal,
Mais pour moi je n'en dirai rien;
Il m'a fait trop de bien pour en dire du mal,
Il m'a fait trop de mal pour en dire du bien."

In the latter years of his life Chatham's health was so variable that he rarely spoke with animation unless roused by the excitement of reply. A curious picture of the great orator is given in the following account of a visit to the House of Lords. Joseph Cradock wrote:

"Lord Carlisle made room for me between himself and another nobleman. That nobleman got up to speak, and then I perceived that it was the great Lord Chatham. He spoke only for a short time, was confused, and seemed greatly disconcerted; and then, suddenly turning to me he asked whether I had ever heard him speak before. 'Not in this House, my Lord' was my reply. 'In no House, Sir,' says he, 'I hope, have I ever so disgraced myself. I feel ill, and I have been alarmed and annoyed this morning before I arrived. I scarce know what I have been talking about.' After an interval Chatham spoke again. He suddenly arose, and poured forth a torrent of eloquence that utterly astonished. The change was inconceivable; the fire had been kindled, and we were all electrified with his energy and eloquence. At length he seemed quite exhausted, and, as he sat down, with great frankness, shook me by the hand and seemed personally to recollect me, and I then ventured to say, 'I hope your Lordship is satisfied.' 'Yes, Sir,' he replied with a smile, 'I think I have now redeemed my credit.'" *

* *Memoirs of Joseph Cradock.* Quoted by Trevelyan, *American Revolution*, i., 182.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ATTEMPT TO SAVE THE EMPIRE.

1772–1778.

IT remains for us to consider Chatham's later American policy. Nothing is more remarkable than the apathy which prevailed in England from the date of Townshend's budget till the penal measures of 1774. The world of politics and society was as blind to the great issue as that more brilliant society in Paris which discussed atheism and the fashions while the terrors of the Revolution were preparing. As Burke said, a robbery on Hounslow Heath excited more notice than the riots in America which threatened to dissever an Empire. The King realised that a great contest was impending, and called up his inexhaustible obstinacy for the struggle; the commercial classes knew that their prosperity was threatened, but their influence in Parliament was perhaps weaker during the ascendancy there of the "King's friends" than at any period since the Revolution; the most experienced officers of the army and navy dreaded a possible war more than the bellicose orators of Westminster; but among the

leading politicians only Chatham, Burke, and Shelburne can be said to have realised the vital gravity of the problem which North wished *solvere ambulando*. The sentiments of Rockingham, Richmond, and the Cavendishes were true and sound, but the unavailing efforts of Burke to drag them from their fox-hunting and racing to St. Stephens are well known, and it is difficult to believe that the Whigs would have persisted in their masterly inactivity if they had seen the true issue. It would be a grave injustice to accuse them of hunting while Rome burned. Even Chatham from 1770 to 1774 seems to have paid little attention to what was occurring in the colonies, and during these years there is scarcely a mention of America in his correspondence.

This ignorance and apathy in England contrasts with a ferment of opinion in America, where men were slowly and cautiously considering their position, and comparing the claims of old association and tradition with the claims of the new order and society whose birth was heralded. It was a question momentous enough for each individual, whether his allegiance should be given to the Empire which seemed to have reached the height and summit of its power, or to the new State whose very existence as an united confederation was doubtful, and its greatness a matter of faith in the future. In one aspect the struggle was one between contending political principles, and in England especially it was a contest between "Revolution principles" and the system of oligarchic government, which was the actual result of the Revolution of 1689. But the Amer-

ican Revolution was more than a tragic incident in the fight between parties which is the continuous occupation of the British race. It is true that many Americans, one third probably of the colonists, opposed the movement for separation, and that many Englishmen assisted the Americans in their resistance, but that which began as a civil war within the Empire became before its close a war between rival nations. The British race had lost its centre of common allegiance, and divided itself not into two parties but into two States. That was an even greater result of the struggle than the triumph of self-governing and democratic principles which the new State embodied. The American Loyalists were loyal to the Imperial connection, but they separated themselves from their fellow-colonists not because they approved the measures of Grenville and Townshend and North, but because their patriotic devotion to the Empire was even stronger than the love they felt for their own colonies. In the American patriots that balance of sentiment was reversed. In England parties were divided on more exclusively party grounds; there was an admixture of vulgar assertiveness of power which largely influenced the Bedford section of the Ministerial party, but so far as men were divided by thoughtful opinion and not by mere prejudice, it was on broad questions of Imperial policy. Viewed in the most favourable light, the ideas of George III. were that on grounds of Imperial expediency the colonies could not be trusted with self-government; that the central authority of the Empire must be maintained throughout its whole

GEORGE III.

FROM A PAINTING BY ALLAN RAMSAY IN THE NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY.

extent; that resistance to that authority must be repressed or the colonies would not remain in that subordinate position to the mother country which was their true place. Distrust of colonial self-government, and the belief that colonies existed simply for the benefit of the mother country were the characteristics of the old colonial system, and it was for the old colonial system that George III. fought. That system was not his invention, but the headlong folly of his attempt to retain it in America lay in his neglect of the fact that, contrary indeed to the theory of the times, the Americans had enjoyed for a century the essential advantages of self-government. What was theoretically an assertion of existing law was in effect an extinction of privileges that had long existed; the legality of Parliamentary taxation might be defended, its inexpediency was flagrant because the colonies had taxed themselves through their Assemblies for a hundred years. Chatham and Burke in their resistance to George III. expressed in immortal words many ideas on which the free colonial system of Great Britain is founded to-day. They agreed in believing that colonial self-government creates content and loyalty, and they shared the great conception of an Empire in which all members, whether Americans or British, should enjoy equal rights; Burke, and not Chatham, was among the pioneers of greater commercial freedom, and they differed again when the struggle had ceased to be one of party and had become international.

It is unnecessary to relate all the events that occurred between Townshend's budget and the penal

measures against Boston. The device of non-importation agreements which had succeeded against the Stamp Act was revived, the Assemblies responded to the invitation of Massachusetts and protested against the new duties, the Governors replied by a series of futile dissolutions, which only resulted in the return of new Assemblies that were even more determined than those dissolved. The Government policy in England was officially declared by a series of eight resolutions introduced by Hillsborough in the Lords and passed by the Commons on January 26, 1769, which condemned the disloyalty of Massachusetts and the Boston Convention, and approved of sending a military force to Boston. Bedford also carried an address advising the use of an Act of Henry VIII. by which persons accused of treason might be deported to England for trial before a special commission. This last violent proposal was nicely calculated to increase the discontent in America, and convince even moderate men that there was a tyrannical design to be feared in English policy. The Bedfords were in fact the enemies of conciliatory proposals, and but for them peace might have been secured. On May 1, 1769, the Cabinet met and Grafton moved that all Townshend's duties should be repealed, but it was carried by one vote that the duty on tea should be retained in order to preserve the right to levy such duties. "We angrily rejected the bribe," says a recent American writer, "all the more angrily, perhaps, because we half suspected the stability of our own virtue in rejecting it." * None

* Tyler, *Literature of the American Revolution*, i., 249.

the less a good deal of tea was imported and paid duty. Lord North obtained the sanction of the Commons to the Cabinet policy on March 5, 1770, when the Opposition declared in favour of total repeal and voted 142 to 204, a very large minority for those days. Welbore Ellis and Barrington, two of the King's friends, declaring that the Americans were unworthy of even the smallest indulgence, declined to support even partial repeal. There had been serious disorders in Boston, and these formed the main argument of the anti-American party and were an effective cause of increased prejudice and misunderstanding. Chatham took the wise view of such excesses, when he said that he could not justify them, but that ebullitions of liberty ought to be treated tenderly. "The discontent of two millions of people deserves consideration and the foundation ought to be removed." That was a statesman's judgment, but the majority of mankind are not statesmen, and the mob violences in America, harsh and cruel in their local effect, were a serious hindrance to the cause of conciliation and a blot on the record of the patriotic party. They afforded some justification for the dispatch of two regiments to Boston, which Chatham regarded as a grievous mistake. "This poor country," he wrote to Calcraft, "seems doomed to the worst species of ruin; that wrought by her own hands, by oppressing, as foolishly as cruelly, the cause of our greatness, the devoted colonies." * The presence of the troops in Boston was a source of constant irritation; if they had

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iii., 468.

been used to protect the friends of England against the dangers of riot they might have served a proper end, but they were in fact a parade of power, a visible threat, which irritated the inhabitants of Boston without alarming them.

In 1772, the colonies established the committees of grievances, which afforded a means of communication between the different provinces and prepared the way for the Continental Congresses. The home Government, realising too late the weakness of the executive and judiciary in the colonial constitutions, proposed to pay the salaries of Governors and Judges, a measure naturally alarming to the Assemblies, which saw their supremacy threatened. In 1773 occurred the famous publication of a series of private letters, from Hutchinson and others, who had advised "an abridgment of English liberties" in America. Franklin had by some unknown means obtained this correspondence, and transmitted it to his friends, under a pledge that it should not be published. Copies, however, were soon printed and their circulation still further inflamed feeling; the petition from Massachusetts for the dismissal of Governor Hutchinson founded upon his private letters was not unnaturally disregarded by the Privy Council, and Wedderburn found an occasion for his celebrated invective against Franklin, an attack which lessened Franklin's attachment to the British connection. The East India Company having obtained a licence to export a large stock of tea to America, on November 18, 1773, its ship *Dartmouth* arrived in Boston harbour with the tea, and the inhabitants organised

their defence as if they were resisting an invading army. For a month the *Dartmouth* lay in the harbour unable to land its cargo, and unable to leave because the Governor refused a pass until the cargo had been cleared. At length the tension was ended by a body of fifty men disguised as Indians boarding the ship and emptying the tea into the bay. The men acted under the authority of a town meeting, and they well knew that their act was a declaration of war. "Let us consider the issue," the younger Quincey had said that same day, "before we advance to those measures which must bring on the most trying and terrible struggle this country ever saw." The issues had been considered, the struggle had begun.

The reply of the British Government was prompt and stern; although Shelburne wrote to Chatham that Dartmouth was determined "to cover America from the present storm to the utmost of his power," and that North's language was of a moderate cast, yet the policy was much more resolute than anything which had previously been done. A determined effort to crush Boston into submission was to be made and three acts were passed through Parliament. The Boston Port Bill closed that harbour to trade until compensation for the destruction of the tea was made; the Massachusetts Charter was remodelled in a drastic manner, and a futile provision was inserted forbidding public meetings, other than those for elections, without consent of the Governor; and for the impartial administration of justice power was given to the Governor to transfer persons charged with murder, or any capital offence, for trial in Great Brit-

ain or another colony. The view taken of these acts by the people of Massachusetts was tersely stated in their remonstrance: "By the first," they wrote, "the property of unoffending thousands is arbitrarily taken away for the act of a few individuals; by the second our chartered liberties are annihilated; and by the third our lives may be destroyed with impunity." In their ignorance of the real feelings and character of the Americans the Ministry supposed that they had but to crush Boston while the rest of the colonists looked on; their action in fact was the signal for immediate union among the colonies, and their coercion of a single town was answered by a Continental Congress. The House of Commons shared their ignorance, and it is surely the height of irony to find Horace Walpole writing to a friend in the month when the acts were before Parliament, "We are in great tranquillity here — even America gives us no pain — at least it makes no sensation, for the Opposition has not taken up the cause. The general line against the Bostonians is threats." * While the Americans prepared for their Congress, a general election was taking place in England and the majority of Lord North was increased.

Chatham's view of the situation was fully stated in a letter to Shelburne of March 20, 1774.

"The violence committed upon the tea cargo is certainly criminal; nor would it be real kindness to the Americans to adopt their passions and wild pretensions, when they manifestly violate the indispensable ties of civil soci-

* *Letters*, vi., 69.

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HORACE WALPOLE.

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ety. Boston, therefore, appears to me to owe reparation for such a destruction of the property of the East India Company. This is, to my mind, clear and evident; but, I confess, it is equally clear to me, that in pursuing this just object, Government may become unjust; if they attempt to blend the enforcement of general declared rights of the British Parliament (which I must for ever treat as rights in theory only) with a due satisfaction for a tumultuous act of a very criminal nature. The methods, too, proposed, by way of coercion, appear to me too severe, as well as highly exceptionable in order of time, for reparation ought first to be demanded in a solemn manner, and refused by the town and magistracy of Boston, before such a bill of pains and penalties can be called just. . . . Perhaps a fatal desire to take advantage of this guilty tumult of the Bostonians, in order to crush the spirit of liberty among the Americans in general, has taken possession of the heart of Government. If that mad and cruel measure should be pushed, one needs not to be a prophet to say, England has seen her best days. Boston, I hope and believe, would make reparation." *

Washington also remarked that there should have been a requisition of payment and refusal of it before the Boston Port Bill was passed, and undoubtedly this would have been the wise and just course, although at the same time it is highly improbable that Boston would have made any reparation. Such a demand preceding coercion would at least have set the English Government in a fairer light in the eyes of other Americans, whereas coercion preceding the demand brought the other colonies to the side of

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iv., 336, 337.

Massachusetts. Compensation, as Chatham wrote, implied a recognition of the authority of Great Britain.

"Had they stopped here, much ground would have been gained for English government, and the great work of reducing back the colonies to order, and a competent measure of obedience, would have been more than half accomplished. By going on to further severities, I fear, all is put to the hazard. America guilty, would have submitted; and subsequent lenitives might have restored mutual good will and necessary obedience. America disfranchised, and her character mutilated, may, I forbode, resist, and the cause become general on that vast continent. If this happens, England is no more." *

Chatham returned to London in order to speak against another measure of this year renewing the Quartering Act, and made a speech † of which the profound wisdom was proved by subsequent events. "By blocking up the harbour of Boston, you have involved the innocent trader in the same punishment with the guilty profligates who destroyed your merchandise." "My Lords, I am an old man, and would advise the noble lords in office to adopt a more gentle mode of governing America, for the day is not far distant, when America may vie with these kingdoms, not only in arms but in arts also." "Instead of adding to their miseries, adopt some lenient measures, which may lure them to their duty." "Pass an amnesty on all their youthful errors." "Should their turbulence exist after your proffered terms of forgiveness, I will be among the foremost

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iv., 342. † *Ibid.*, iv., 345.

to move for such measures as will effectually prevent a further relapse." Chatham's insight into the American character was the outcome of deep affection and sympathy; to him they were not "our subjects," but Englishmen who still loved the tones of that deep chord which Hampden smote, they were *cives Romani*, men of the true race, of like faith and passions with himself. "There," he wrote of America, "there where I had garnered up my heart."

The colonists, on the initiative of the Virginian Assembly, supported Boston; the day on which the port was closed was proclaimed a day of prayer and fasting, a solemn league and covenant was entered into to abstain from all commerce with Great Britain, and on September 5, 1774, the delegates of twelve colonies met in the Continental Congress at Philadelphia. The constitution of this Congress was informal, its authority was moral rather than legal. "Certain it is," says an American historian, "that only a very small minority of the people of the colonies were concerned in calling the early Congresses. As certain, also, is it that a very large preponderance of the people of all classes were then strongly opposed to any violent measures, to sundering ties of allegiance, or to seeking anything beyond a peaceful redress of grievances." * Within the Congress, among the ablest Americans a strong body of moderate opinion was disclosed, and though a minority was already determined upon independence the actual outcome was a declaration of principles far from extreme and in no sense seditious. The resist-

* Dr. Ellis, in Winsor's *History of America*, vi., 233.

ance of Boston was approved, and a lengthy statement of grievances enumerated acts which must be repealed, declared a standing army illegal without colonial consent, and condemned the arbitrary acts of Governors. But on the other hand only peaceful means of resistance were commended, the legislative authority of Parliament was admitted, and in the address to the people of Great Britain it was explicitly stated: "Place us in the same situation that we were at the close of the last war, and our former harmony will be restored." Even the second Congress, it must be remembered, declared that it did not desire independence, and adopted a petition to the King, full of loyal expressions, which was drawn up by Dickinson, who represented the moderate section of the patriotic party. It besought the sovereign himself to interfere on behalf of his subjects. Richard Penn, who carried the petition, was not permitted to see the King, for George III. had no intention of using the prerogative in a manner which might have won for it a splendid historical justification. A proclamation against sedition was the only answer that reached the ears of his American subjects.

Chatham wrote and spoke with the highest admiration of the Congress. "I think it must be evident to every unprejudiced man in England who feels for the rights of mankind, that America, under all her oppressions and provocations, holds forth to us the most fair and just opening, for restoring harmony and affectionate intercourse as heretofore." * For

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iv., 368.

January 20, 1775, he had given notice of a motion on America, and on that day he took Franklin to the House. The purport of his motion was not known, and Horace Walpole mentions two curious speculations. "I had been told that Lord Chatham was commissioned by Dr. Franklin to offer the King £350,000 a year from America, if the offensive bills were repealed. The Ministers thought he was to ask for an increase of force, so their intelligence was at least no better than mine?" * What Chatham actually moved for was an address to the King to remove the troops from Boston, and when this was known, says Walpole, the Opposition stared and shrugged, the courtiers stared and laughed. It was in fact a proposal as startling and unexpected as that other very different one for an immediate war with Spain which he had submitted to a trembling Council, and it was the more courageous of the two. The man of decisive action was seen in both, and the wisdom of both proposals was justified by the event. It was the moment of crisis, and though the voices of the street and market place would have derided the withdrawal of troops, as an act of cowardice, of weakness inexcusable in a mighty people, yet this was the one solution, and it was offered at the last available hour. But the courtiers stared and laughed, caring less in their ephemeral wisdom for the union with America than for beating the Americans. The speech in which Chatham urged his proposal was essentially practical. "Gage's army in Boston," he said, "is an army of impotence and irritation; at

* *Letters*, vi., 185.

any moment the first blood may be shed, and it will be *immedicabile vulnus;* an hour now lost in allaying ferments in America may produce years of calamity." "Adopt, then, the grace, while you have the opportunity, of reconcilement."

"What though you march from town to town, and from province to province; though you should be able to enforce a temporary and local submission, which I only suppose, not admit—how shall you be able to secure the obedience of the country you leave behind you in your progress, to grasp the dominion of eighteen hundred miles of continent, populous in numbers, possessing valour, liberty and resistance? . . . As an American, I would recognise to England her supreme right of regulating commerce and navigation; as an Englishman in birth and principles, I recognise to the Americans their supreme inalienable right in their property; a right which they are justified in the defence of to the last extremity. To maintain this principle is the common cause of the Whigs on the other side of the Atlantic, and on this. 'Tis liberty to liberty engaged,' that they will defend themselves, their families, and their country. In this great cause they are immovably allied; it is the alliance of God and nature—immutable, eternal—fixed as the firmament of heaven. . . . For solidity of reasoning, force of sagacity, and wisdom of conclusion, under such a complication of difficult circumstances, no nation or body of men can stand in preference to the general Congress at Philadelphia. I trust it is obvious to your Lordships, that all attempts to impose servitude upon such men, to establish despotism over such a mighty continental *nation*, must be vain, must be fatal. We shall be forced ultimately to

retreat, I say we must necessarily undo these violent oppressive acts; they must be repealed—you will repeal them; I pledge myself for it, that you will in the end repeal them; I stake my reputation on it:— I will consent to be taken for an idiot, if they are not finally repealed. . . . Concession comes with better grace and more salutary effect from superior power: *Tuque prior, tu parce, projice tela manu.* . . . If the Ministers thus persevere in misadvising and misleading the King, I will not say that they can alienate the affections of his subjects from his Crown; but I will affirm, that they will make the Crown not worth his wearing. I will not say that the King is betrayed; but I will pronounce that the kingdom is undone." *

The entire speech is worthy to be remembered with Burke's great philosophic oration, and higher praise it is impossible to bestow.

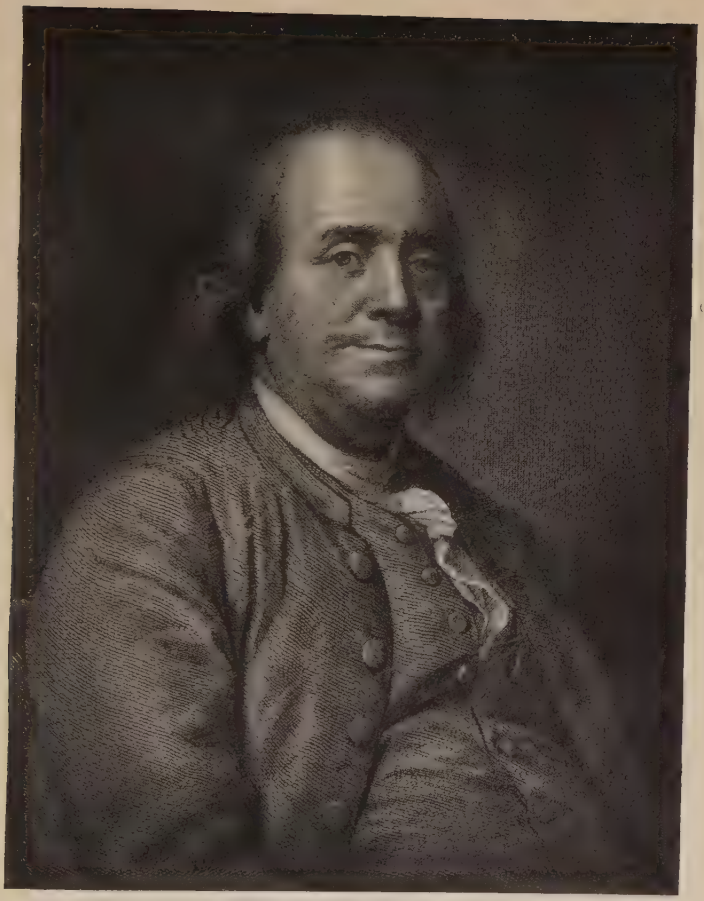
On February 1st, Chatham produced in the Lords his plan for settling the troubles in America.† It was in the form of a Provisional Act, which aimed at a lasting settlement of claims not sufficiently ascertained and circumscribed. It asserted the supreme legislative and superintending power of Parliament and the Crown, particularly in regard to navigation and trade, and to the dispatch of armies to any of the British dominions without the consent of any provincial assembly existing in such dominion. It was further declared and enacted "that no tallage, tax, or other charge for His Majesty's revenue, shall be commanded or levied from British freemen in

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iv., 377–384.

† The text is in *Chatham Correspondence*, iv., App. 1.

America, without common consent, by act of provincial assembly there, duly convened for that purpose." The meeting of the General Congress at Philadelphia was legalised in order that it might "take into consideration the making due recognition of the supreme legislative authority and superintending power of Parliament over the colonies as aforesaid." The Congress was to be required to consider a free grant to the King of a certain perpetual revenue to be appropriated towards the National Debt, and to fix the quotas to be borne by each province. The recognition of Parliamentary authority by Congress was to precede the operation of the clause declaring the sole right of the colonies in the matter of taxation. Further, the Admiralty Courts in America were reduced to their ancient limits, trial by jury was restored, and the jury of vicinage. A list of acts followed which were suspended from the date of the act, and to be repealed from the day on which the colonies recognised the authority of Parliament. These acts were those against which the Congress had protested. The Judges were to be paid by the Crown but to hold office *quam diu se bene gesserint*, and the Charters of the several colonies were not to be invaded or resumed except on some legal ground of forfeiture.

Chatham, while preparing this scheme, had lengthy consultations with Franklin. Mr. Franklin claimed no share in its authorship, his principal work being to copy into the Bill a list of the acts of which Congress had demanded the repeal. It is perhaps idle to discuss the capacity of this scheme to turn



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

AFTER THE PAINTING BY DUPLESSIS.

the current of destiny. It offered a solution of the problem, but what was there to persuade men to adopt it? The wisdom of the schools could not avail when power was in the hand of George III., of Sandwich and Gower and Hillsborough. The Lords would not even admit the Bill to a second reading, and in America the scheme received little attention.* It was not unnatural that the greatest Englishman of the day should be angered by the contemptuous usage he received from the men who were hurrying England into a disastrous war, which they were utterly incapable of conducting; and Chatham anticipated the verdict of history in a passage of fierce invective against the Ministers. "The whole of your political conduct has been one continued series of weakness, temerity, despotism, ignorance, futility, negligence, and the most notorious servility, incapacity, and corruption." "Your situation is precarious; who should wonder that you can put a negative on any measure which must annihilate your power, deprive you of your emoluments, and at once reduce you to that state of insignificance for which God and nature designed you?"† The delivery of the speech, says Walpole, recalled the memory of Chatham's ancient lustre.

But while the acceptance of Chatham's scheme was impossible in England, and doubtful in America,

* The *New York Journal* said of the Bill, "The friendly appearance and perhaps design of a great part of the Bill, would have a powerful tendency to divide and weaken us." *Amer. Archives*, Series iv., 1., 1506.

† *Chatham Correspondence*, iv., 395, 396.

it is the best example of his method in legislation, illustrating both his great power and insight and the limitations of his mind. His belief in great principles was so profound that he often overlooked the difficulties of their application, and no doubt he overrated the offer of a Declaratory Bill to nations which were arming. Opposing hosts do not lay down their arms because a careful logical statement shows that there is both truth and error in the contentions of each side. The Bill was in the nature of an arbitrator's award, and such judgments were even more difficult of acceptance in the eighteenth century than in our own. But if all that can be urged in depreciation of its academic nature be granted, the scheme possesses remarkable merits. Its central and most striking feature is the recognition of the Congress, its approbation of colonial unity and, within clear limits, of colonial self-government. Many Englishmen feared the Congress as a rival Parliament within the Empire, many condemned it as a rebel assembly, but Chatham proposed to use it. It had been naturally evolved, its proceedings had displayed true political instinct, its declarations afforded "a just and fair opening" and were avowedly hostile to separation. Therefore, said Chatham, strengthen it by your recognition, use it as your means of communication with all the colonies, reply to its opening by announcing the terms of a general settlement, for it is easier to deal with one Congress than with many Assemblies. Adams, we know, was alarmed lest the moderation of Congress should produce agreement, and as Adams aimed at separation

while Chatham aimed at union, the alarm of Adams was the justification of Chatham. This feature of the plan was an unique proof of political wisdom, and raises it higher than the terms of conciliation outlined in Burke's thirteen resolutions. The effect of its adoption upon American sentiment would have been great, and the powerful body of opinion in favour of England would have been strengthened. Doubtless the terms of settlement contained in the Bill would not have been immediately accepted, but it is at least equally certain that they would not have been immediately rejected. Discussion would have been substituted for war, and out of discussion a different issue might have come forth. It was, however, a counsel of perfection to ask Parliament to recognise and confer with the Congress that had been declared a rebel and seditious body, and the House of Commons was never created which would have adopted so ideal a course in the midst of so heated a controversy.

While Chatham eagerly counselled a magnanimous generosity, it is clear that he thought first of the Empire as a whole. This was a Bill of assertion as well as a Bill of concession, and no point was yielded that would weaken the central authority in any essential particular. The colonists had of course protested against standing armies and against the commercial regulations which were the root cause of American discontent. Chatham, however, believed that these matters were of general Imperial concern, and so asserted in his Bill. In an interview with Franklin he expressed much satisfaction that America did not

aim at independence or getting rid of the Navigation Acts, "but allowed that some amendment might be made in the commercial laws." * Franklin's judgment on the plan as a whole is of great interest, and confirms the belief that if it had been accepted it would at least have produced an amicable discussion. On February 5, 1775, Franklin wrote to an American friend: †

"It is thought by our friends, that Lord Chatham's plan, if it had been enacted here, would have prevented present mischief, and might have been the foundation of a lasting good agreement; for, though in some points it might not perfectly coincide with our ideas and wishes, we should have proposed modifications or variations, where we should judge them necessary; in fine, the two countries might have met in perfect union. I hope therefore, it will be treated with respect by our writers, and its author honoured for the attempt; for, though he has put some particulars into it, as I think, by way of complying a little with the general prejudice here, and to make more material parts go better down, yet I am persuaded he would not otherwise be tenacious of those parts, meaning sincerely to make us contented and happy, so far as consistent with the general welfare."

Unhappily Chatham fell ill shortly after this date, and until May, 1777, was absent from public life, and unable to influence opinion. During this period the question he had hoped to settle by political means was transferred to another arena, and men were only reminded of the great conciliator by the rapid fulfil-

* *Franklin's Works* (Sparks), v., 4, 7. † *Ibid*, x., 438.

ment of his mournful prophecies. North made a declaration that when any colony voluntarily made such a contribution to the defence of the Empire as satisfied Parliament it should be free of Parliamentary taxes, but before this offer could be considered the first blood had been shed at Lexington, the *immedicabile vulnus* had been inflicted. Congress, indeed, still declared that they had no desire to separate, and Dickinson made one last effort in the petition to the King, but an army of self-defence was organised, and Washington was given the command. How different would have been the mood of this Congress if Chatham's plan had been adopted is shown by the fact that, although England spoke only through North, every important step in a revolutionary direction was opposed, and carried only by bare majorities. But Congress was followed by the battle of Bunker's Hill, by the futile invasion of Canada, and by Lord Dunmore's savage violence in Virginia. The war had commenced, and with evil auspices for the mother country. Howe evacuated Boston in March, 1776, and sailed for Halifax, and so difficult was it to find sufficient men for the service that George III. was compelled to buy seventeen thousand of their subjects from the Princes of Brunswick and Hesse Cassel and Waldeck. The cost of this purchase was a heavy one, as it was followed immediately by the Declaration of Independence.

Chatham would not allow his son, who had been with Carleton in Canada, to serve against the Americans, and in July, 1776, at the moment when independence was declared he confided to his physician a

statement of his opinions,* which remained unshaken, in regard to America.

"Unless effectual measures were speedily taken for reconciliation with the colonies, he was fully persuaded, that, in a very few years, France will set her foot on English ground. That in the present moment, her policy may probably be to wait some time, in order to see England more deeply engaged in this ruinous war, *against herself*, in America; as well as to prove how far the Americans, abetted by France *indirectly* only, may be able to make a stand, before she takes an *open* part, by declaring war upon England."

The Bourbon danger was never absent from Chatham's mind when he considered America; but the English Ministers were either actually blind to it or wilfully indifferent. That Chatham accurately gauged the French policy is clear from the secret memorials which Vergennes a few months previously had forwarded to the French King; the long preparations of Choiseul had been closely followed by Shelburne who, as Disraeli said, was the best informed statesman in Europe, and had been communicated by him to Chatham, but the officials in England had been criminally neglectful of this tremendous feature in the problem confronting them. War with the colonists meant war with the Bourbons, and yet the navy was neglected. Vergennes informed his sovereign that Providence had marked out this moment for the humiliation of England, and when the policy of open war was declined, he

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iv., 424.

counselled the exact policy which Chatham had indicated as probable. "The continuance of the war for at least one year is desirable to the two Crowns. To that end the British Ministry must be maintained in the persuasion that France and Spain are pacific, so that it may not fear to embark in an active and costly campaign, while on the other hand the courage of the Americans should be kept up by secret favours and vague hopes which will prevent accommodation." This policy was carried out, and arms and money were granted to the Americans, while Vergennes was assuring the English ambassador that France was strictly neutral and pacific. The American commissioners were able to assure their countrymen that every nation in Europe wished to see Britain humbled. All scruples against seeking foreign assistance were silenced by the employment of German mercenaries, and the ill success of American arms during 1776 and 1777 made it an urgent necessity.

It is impossible to trace even in outline the course of the war, and it is enough to say that the first campaigns convinced the Americans of the vast difficulties involved in the struggle, and showed also to astute observers that although the British might win pitched battles they could not subdue a continent three thousand miles from their base. The physical difficulties of intercommunication between their armies were too great for complete success. If a great War Minister had been in command, it is possible that temporary success might have been achieved; but the War Office was under the casual

superintendence of Lord George Germaine, and the generals employed consistently failed to follow up their advantages. Howe took New York and Philadelphia in the course of his leisurely campaigns, and Burgoyne, marching south from Canada, began with a brilliant success in the capture of Ticonderoga. These first successes made the war popular in England, though her commerce suffered terribly from the American privateers, which won large fortunes for their owners. The first great check to the British arms was the Convention of Saratoga (October 17, 1777), when Burgoyne, cut off from his expected allies and surrounded by the enemy, was compelled to surrender his whole army.

The moment his health allowed, Chatham returned to London, and on May 30, 1777, moved an address for the cessation of hostilities.* He urged the impossibility of conquering America, and the impending danger of French action. "You talk of your powerful forces to disperse their army; I might as well talk of driving them before me with this crutch." "What will you do out of the protection of your fleet? In the winter, if your men are together, they are starved; and if dispersed, they are taken off in detail." "The moment a treaty with France appears, you must declare war, though you had only five ships of the line in England." Speaking again, on November 20th, before the news of Saratoga had arrived, Chatham, declaring that in three campaigns we had done nothing and suffered much, referred to "the sufferings and perhaps total loss of the northern

* *Chatham Correspondence*, iv., 433.

force." It was necessary, he said, "to instruct the throne in the language of truth"; but yesterday, and England might have stood against the world; now none so poor to do her reverence, and Ministers dared not resent the insult of French interference. The discipline of our troops was wounded, and pillage and rapine were disgracing the British arms. "But, my Lords, who is the man that, in addition to these disgraces and mischiefs of our army, has dared to authorise and associate to our arms the tomahawk and scalping knife of the savage?" "Besides these murderers and plunderers, let me ask our Ministers —what other allies have they required? What other powers have they associated to their cause? *Have they entered into an alliance with the King of the gipsies?*" He advocated an appeal to the sound parts of America, and protested that as an Englishman he could not wish the Americans success if they struggled for independence and total disconnection from England. "The strong bias of America, at least of the wise and sounder parts of it, naturally inclines to this happy and Constitutional re-connection with you. Notwithstanding the temporary intrigues with France, we may still be assured of their ancient and confirmed partiality to us. America and France cannot be congenial; there is something decisive and confirmed in the honest American that will not assimilate to the futility and levity of Frenchmen." To this occasion belongs that ornate philippic against the employment of Indians, which is the most frequently quoted example of Chatham's oratory. Like all the most astonishing outbursts of

his eloquence, this was delivered in reply, and was occasioned by a chance remark in debate. It is now established that the Americans themselves were the first to employ Indians, and also that Indians had been employed against the French under the sanction of Chatham himself. These facts afforded the defence of precedent to Ministers, but it was not the employment of Indians, but the defence made by Suffolk which drew the attack of Chatham. Suffolk contended that "it was perfectly justifiable to use all the means that God and nature put into their hands," and it was this conjunction of the most venerable names with the vile barbarity of savages that inspired into the orator wrath, indignation, and scorn, which were expressed in moving invocations of all that most solemnly impresses the human mind, of religion, and justice, and the State. Such rhetoric, unpremeditated and uncomposed, was the prerogative of one to whom those ideas were realities; when Chatham invoked the genius of the Constitution he spoke no vacant bombast, but rather called upon that which to his mind was the supreme embodiment of law. "He started up," says Grafton, "with a degree of indignation that added to the force of the sudden and unexampled burst of eloquence, which must have affected any audience, and which appeared to me to surpass all that we have ever heard of the celebrated orators of Greece and Rome."

The news of Saratoga immediately decided the Court of France, and on February 6, 1778, the treaty acknowledging American independence was signed, and the alliance entered upon. The whole situation

was changed; the colonists were no longer a party within the Empire fighting for civil rights, but the avowed ally of England's inveterate enemy, pledged to assist in the conquest of British territory by foreign arms. No blame, certainly, can attach to the Americans for seizing every assistance offered, as not even the surrender of Burgoyne could compensate for the serious weakness in organisation and equipment which had hitherto hampered the army of Washington, and the urgent need of further help was fully realised by all the leaders of American opinion. But the English friends of the colonists were compelled to recast their consideration of the case, which was still further modified by the new policy adopted by North. When the French alliance was known, steps were taken to conciliate America; peace commissioners were appointed with full power to negotiate a settlement, to suspend any act passed since 1763, and to surrender the right of taxation. Everything might be yielded except independence. Such was the instant effect of the French threat upon George III. and Lord North, and it is not surprising that the Americans, having obtained so much, believed that they could obtain all, and declined to negotiate except on the basis of independence. Moreover, the offer made them was suspect, because it came from the men who had been their bitter enemies, and was conveyed through commissioners who could not readily be trusted. Chatham himself had protested that conciliation was only possible if it proceeded from men more acceptable to the colonists than Ministers could be.

"Who are the persons that are to treat on the part of this afflicted and deluded country? The very men who have been the authors of our misfortunes; the very men who have endeavoured, by the most pernicious policy, the highest injustice and oppression, the most cruel and devastating war, to enslave those people, they would conciliate to gain the confidence and affection of those who have survived the Indian tomahawk and the German bayonet!"

But even when it is granted that Lord North was not the man to achieve a settlement, it is clear that from the English point of view his surrender of all the points demanded by the colonists in the beginning of the struggle altered the character of the contest. The war was no longer waged on behalf of a bad policy, but on behalf of the Imperial connection between Great Britain and America.

In the light of these new facts two policies were possible. The Rockinghams argued that it would be even more difficult to conquer America and the Bourbons combined than to conquer America alone, and that therefore England should immediately grant independence and avoid the further difficulties involved in a French and Spanish contest. The immediate expediency of such a course was evident, but Chatham believed that national honour was infinitely superior to such considerations of immediate expediency. He believed that to admit a separation between the mother country and her colonies would be fatal to the greatness of England, and that to admit it on the dictation of France would be fatal to her honour. His policy was to fight France, to beat

France in order to convince the colonists that her alliance availed nothing, and to offer them everything except that independence which he believed so irretrievably damaging to the Empire. The great struggle for wise government in the colonies, in which he had given so freely of his passion and his strength, had suddenly become of secondary importance; the ancient inveterate enemy of England was renewing her evil devices, and every other contest was insignificant by the side of that age-long warfare between the neighbouring nations. "The dismemberment of the Empire," writes Macaulay in one of the most brilliant passages in his essays, "seemed to Chatham less ruinous and humiliating, when produced by domestic dissensions, than when produced by foreign interference. His blood boiled at the degradation of his country. Whatever lowered her among the nations of the earth, he felt as a personal outrage to himself. And the feeling was natural. He had made her so great. He had been so proud of her; and she had been so proud of him. He remembered how, more than twenty years before, in a day of gloom and dismay, when her possessions were torn from her, when her flag was dishonoured, she had called on him to save her. He remembered the sudden and glorious change which his energy had wrought, the long series of triumphs, the days of thanksgiving, the nights of illumination." That indeed sets vividly before us the pride and faith of Chatham in England and in himself. But, says Macaulay, his passions overpowered his judgment, and he could not without absurdity maintain

that it was easier to conquer France and America together than America alone. Macaulay forgot that Chatham did not intend to conquer America; he trusted that he might win back the affections of the Americans — a vain hope perhaps, but not even at that date demonstrably absurd. We must view his policy as a whole; it demanded a complete change in the Ministry, and the dismissal of those who had been their enemies would certainly have made the Americans more willing to negotiate, just as a dictatorship of Chatham would have increased the alarm of France and Spain. His name was beloved in America as it was feared in Europe. With complete power in his hands Chatham would have concentrated his forces against France, and exhausted all the means of persuasion with America. It is within the verge of possibility that his return to power might have induced the Americans to abandon the treaty with France, and that would have meant the triumph of his policy.

Before condemning Chatham's policy of war with France it must be remembered that the Bourbons had undoubtedly broken the laws of international comity. There could be no pretence that the revolt in the colonies had reached the stage when their recognition as an independent State could be justified; there was no settled government and no absolute certainty of success. Was the insult to be passed by without resentment? What would have been the effect upon the spirit and character of the English nation if it had calmly accepted foreign dictation? So humiliating a decision at a moment of grave crisis

would have lowered the courage of the people, it would have been a lasting precedent of weakness to which timid statesmen might have appealed in every succeeding crisis. To set prudence above high spirit, nicely to calculate the less and more of immediate expediency in moments of critical decision, to obey the maxims of quietude when others are straining in the race — these were not the counsels which had appealed to Englishmen or to any other great people. In the life of nations as in the life of men the loss that follows a weak decision may be greater than the loss that follows defeat.

The great majority of the English people realised that war was inevitable, and during the early months of 1778 there was great anxiety that Chatham should be called back to office. Even Bute desired it, while Mansfield declared that without Chatham in command the ship must go down, and North begged the King to allow him to resign and to send for the Opposition leader. "I see plainly," wrote Camden, "the public does principally look up to him, and such is the opinion of the world as to his ability to advise as well as execute in this perilous crisis, that they never will be satisfied with any change or arrangement where he is not among the first." The King with that stoutness of heart that never deserted him was ready to face a war with France and Spain, but he obstinately declined to grant office to Chatham except as a subordinate Minister to North. Nothing could move him from a fixed determination to allow no change which would make the adminis-

tration independent of himself. "This episode," writes Mr. Lecky, "appears to me the most criminal in the whole reign of George III., and in my own judgment it is as criminal as any of those acts which led Charles I. to the scaffold." If Chatham had retained his health there can be little doubt that he would have been forced upon the King by Parliament and the people, but the great life was nearing its end, and in the moment when she so much needed him, amidst the storm of foreign war and civil war and universal hostility, England was to be deprived of Chatham.

It was on April 6, 1778, that the last great episode occurred, when Richmond proposed a motion in the Lords, the purport of which was that American independence should be immediately recognised. Chatham, though worn with illness, came down to the House for the last time. He was dressed in black, his body swathed in flannel, and supported by crutches, and on either side his son, William Pitt, and his son-in-law, Lord Mahon, assisted him to his place. As he entered, the peers made a lane for him to pass through, and he bowed to them with that regal courtliness for which he was famous. On his face was the pallor of death but the fire of genius shone in his eyes. "He looked like a dying man, yet never was seen a figure of more dignity; he appeared like a being of a superior species." When Richmond had spoken, he rose slowly and with difficulty and, at first with low and feeble voice but afterwards with full resonance, he uttered his last words to the English people.

"I rejoice that the grave has not closed upon me; that I am still alive to lift up my voice against the dismemberment of this ancient and most noble monarchy. . . . My Lords, his Majesty succeeded to an empire as great in extent as its reputation was unsullied. Shall we tarnish the lustre of this nation by an ignominious surrender of its rights and fairest possessions? Shall this great kingdom now fall prostrate before the House of Bourbon? Surely, my Lords, this nation is no longer what it was! Shall a people that fifteen years ago was the terror of the world now stoop so low as to tell its ancient inveterate enemy, Take all we have, only give us peace. It is impossible!"

"In God's Name, if it is absolutely necessary to declare either for peace or war, and the former cannot be preserved with honour, why is not the latter commenced without hesitation? I am not, I confess, well informed of the resources of this kingdom; but I trust it has still sufficient to maintain its just rights though I know them not. But, my Lords, any state is better than despair. Let us at least make an effort; and if we must fall, let us fall like men!"

Richmond made a brief reply, and Chatham rose again, but unable to utter a word he pressed his hand to his heart and sunk down in a swoon. He was carried unconscious to a house in Downing Street, and thence was removed to his villa at Hayes, where on May 11th he breathed his last. One incident of that last illness is recorded. He bade his son, with whom he had often studied the great literatures and histories of the master states, read from the *Iliad* the lines describing the burial of Hector and the sorrow of Troy.

CHAPTER X.

CHATHAM'S PERSONALITY AND HISTORICAL POSITION.

THE personality of Chatham, which, viewed from a distance, inspired whole nations with awe, was enigmatical to those who knew him intimately, if indeed there were any who so knew him. Shelburne, of all contemporary politicians the keenest in brain, saw much of Chatham in his private as well as public life. He amused himself by an analysis and dissection of Chatham's character, using the knife with the nerve of a surgeon, displaying the diseased and healthy organs with the composure of a scientist. It is a skilful microscopic study, but if we knew nothing of Chatham outside this record we should think of him as an incomparably effective actor, and should miss altogether that image of the victorious Minister, the patriot of lofty and disinterested virtue, which was impressed on the national mind. The intimate study of great men is proverbially disillusionising, but it is never certain that the intimate view is the right one. The riddle of Chatham's character is the contrast between the unquestionable greatness of his public action and the

disturbing evidence of what seemed like pose and charlatanism. The very suspicion of charlatanism seems alien to true greatness, of which directness and simplicity are the most certain proofs. Yet Mr. Lecky, who credits Chatham with great disinterestedness, great courage, great patriotism, united with an intense love of liberty, sums up his criticism in the remark: "Of all very great Englishmen, he is perhaps the one in whom there was the largest admixture of the qualities of the charlatan." The judgment of the contemporary is more severe than that of the historian. "Pitt was certainly above avarice, but as to everything else, he only repressed his desires and acted." It does not appear "that he went beyond what was necessary to satisfy the people, to secure his wished-for situation; in truth it was his favourite maxim that 'a little new went a long way.'" "He did not cultivate men, because he felt it an incumbrance, and thought he could act with more advantage without the incumbrance of a party." "He passed his time studying words and expression, always with a view to throw the responsibility of every measure upon some other, while he held a high, pompous, unmeaning language. What took much from his character was that he was always made-up and never natural, in a perpetual state of exertion, incapable of friendship, or of any act which tended to it, and constantly upon the watch and never unbent." "He knew the value of condescension, and reserved himself for the moment when he was almost certain of gaining his point by it, till then he pranced and vapoured. He likewise mixed into his

conduct strict honour in details, which I have often observed deceives many men in great affairs." *

Shelburne was the ablest and most faithful of Chatham's political allies, and it is remarkable that he should have penned this rather bitter criticism upon his former chief. Possibly the recollection of interminable conversations producing no clear result obliterated the memory of great actions. The habit of dilatory declamation was, says the Abbé Morellet, the reproach which those who knew him intimately brought against Lord Chatham.

"Lord Shelburne has whispered it in my ear, and Mr. Franklin has told me a fact completely justifying this reproach. After several fruitless conferences with Lord Chatham on the Stamp Act, he asked for an interview in the country that he might propose certain modifications in the Act of Parliament Lord Chatham intended to introduce. . . . Franklin arrived at eight, Lord Chatham perorated till two o'clock without comprehending or concluding anything, and sent away the American deputy *son papier à la main comme il etait venu*." †

The Abbé, it may be noted, makes the same charge against both Burke and Fox.

There was much in Chatham's conduct to invite such strictures as Shelburne makes. His own ideas about the dignity of statesmen were strained and theatrical; the traditions that he never allowed an under-secretary to sit in his presence, and that he

* Fitzmaurice's *Shelburne*, i., 72.

† From a paper on *English Parties in 1784*, MS.; I am indebted to Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice for this extract.

always conducted public business in full dress, are instances of these ideas. There was extravagant ostentation in his mode of life, in his patriarchal retinue, and in that celebrated advertisement of a Minister's coach and horses for sale, which enlivened the town after his resignation in 1761. He was alive to anything dramatic in his own situation, and never failed to make the best of his part. The very names he bestows on himself in his correspondence, "the Somersetshire hermit," "your village friend," "a strange new creature," a "leader whom nobody follows," show that Chatham was one of those who follow with sensibility the vicissitudes of their own career, and watch with sympathy their own action in the world of men. It was the grandiose aspect of things which possessed his mind; a gorgeous accretion of picturesque imagery surrounded the institutions of the State. Marlborough, it is said, learned English history out of Shakespeare, and the imaginative view, the ardent sentiment of the past, impressed the mind of Chatham. The book, he said, which had taught him most was Plutarch. When he spoke in Parliament the tradition of that assembly, its past battles, its great men, its share in the making of England, were never forgotten; when he knelt before the King, and burst into tears over the gracious condescension of George III., it was the majesty of an ancient throne that oppressed and overpowered his mind. This dramatic view of political life makes Chatham unique among English public men, who for the most part have governed their conduct by pedestrian rules. In him it was perfectly

sincere, and explained both his extravagant pride and his extravagant humility. If, from time to time, Chatham may have been led into extravagance and even absurdity in obedience to the demands of vanity and an exorbitant pride, if he was imperious, unaccommodating, and flagrantly contemptuous of the pride and vanity of other men; if, in his later years he secluded himself, as it were, on the cloudy summit of Olympus, whence he issued edicts and decrees, these failings and idiosyncrasies were more than balanced by his peculiar virtues. He was strong enough to carry the burden of heavier faults. If he was ambitious it was for England, if he was despotic it was in the cause of freedom; modern degeneracy had not touched him, he was of strong will and of definite mind, born not to obey but to rule, to lead a nation, to mould a people, to act in great crises as the instrument of fate. His personality was not distinctively of his time or country and it has often been remarked that in force, will, and ambition he belonged rather to the Rome of Brutus than to the England of Walpole or North. The thunders of his eloquence might have shaken the Forum, his invective might have withered another Catiline, his will might have controlled the Roman legionaries. He belongs indeed to that small class who are recognised not as the greatest of mankind, but as best fitted to lead and control in emergencies, when the minds of men are perplexed by change or fear, and to accomplish some destined end. "The more a man is versed in business," said Chatham in a sentence that throws light on his

character, "the more he sees the hand of Providence. There is no such thing as Chance; it is the unaccountable name of nothing." That consciousness of Providence Chatham shared with every other whose action has shaped the affairs of men—with Cæsar and Napoleon, with Alexander and Attila.

It is never possible to proportion exactly the influence of any one man, still less to say that if one man had not lived his work would have been left undone. Stronger than the impact of any single will is the steady, continuous, and cumulative effect of social forces, which prepare the way for changes and developments that seem sometimes sudden and startling. The results of the war which was conducted by Chatham and by Frederick the Great are properly to be traced back to the racial characteristics of England and Prussia, but without the genius as Minister and the genius as King, these results could not have been won. The true measure of Chatham's capacity as a War Minister is in the comparison of his results with those which the British forces obtained in the earlier war of the Austrian Succession, and in the later American war. In all three wars the resources at the disposal of Great Britain were approximately equal; in the Austrian war the navy won victories but made no conquests, and the army was of little value, while in the American war the command of the sea was only retrieved by Rodney's great but fortunate victory after the French and Spanish fleets had actually commanded the Channel, and the disposition of both the naval and military forces in America made the colonial triumph a more

easy affair than it should have been. Such comparisons cannot be exact, but they at least prove the truth of which Chatham's Ministry is perhaps the most striking example in all history, that in the conduct of great wars the Minister in command is almost as important as the bravery of troops and the efficiency of arms. As without Bismarck there might have been no entry into Paris, so without Chatham there might have been no fall of Quebec. The burden of the war was exclusively borne by Chatham; it was directed not by a council, but by him alone, and the most minute details as well as the general plans were settled by him. It was such a war as the history of nations could not parallel in the extent of its area and the variety of its operations. To the necessary qualities of method, exactness and punctuality in administration, the Minister added the power of inspiring heroism, of conceiving great plans, of steeling and indurating the national will. Nor was the restraint of parsimony, a dangerous virtue when great schemes are pending, allowed to narrow the foundations of an Empire. A contemporary said that England should be grateful to Chatham, since she owed him at least seventy millions of the National Debt, and it is true that he cared little about ways and means; he knew that millions could be raised, and that they would be well spent, and he felt a curious exultation in the thought that he was spending more profusely than any Englishman of the past. Those who read again the debates of 1761 and 1762 will find that this expenditure was the chief topic among those whose main business and

delight was to depreciate the fame of the ex-Minister. There exists for example a plausible discourse by Rigby, in which he argued that the urgent necessities of national economy demanded that England should not keep her conquests.* The course of time has made the defence of Chatham's expenditure a work of supererogation; the destruction of the rival power in India and America has proved no niggardly return to an investment of seventy millions.

The Seven Years' War was the central and decisive campaign in the long war between England and France which began under William III., and ended under Wellington. The dominant consideration underlying this long rivalry was a consideration of trade; men fought for colonial expansion and for command of the sea because on these depended a great commerce. Of all the statesmen who have directed the destinies of England, who have formed the ruling political ideas of the nation, from Burleigh and Cromwell downwards, no one realised this more clearly than Chatham. "England fighting for her trade," said he, "is fighting in the last ditch." Before this war England was one of the three great European Powers; her supremacy at sea was acknowledged, but in America and the West Indies her possessions were not greater than those of France, while in India the French power was greater. At the close of the war the English naval power had been so demonstrated that there was a universal jealousy and alarm in Europe comparable to that created by the threatening supremacy of Louis XIV. France in America

* Walpole, *Memoirs of George III.*, i., 106.

had been narrowed into Louisiana and two small shelters for the fishermen off Newfoundland; in the West Indies she had been allowed to retain both Guadaloupe and Martinique; in India the actual terms of the peace were of less importance than the fact that France acknowledged herself beaten in Bengal, and by her treatment of Lally, her general in the Carnatic, gave evidence that the career of the Indian adventurer was no stepping-stone to favour in Paris. The French retained indeed, and still retain, that square foot of territory which Choiseul besought Montcalm to hold in Canada, and so long as they possessed Mauritius no opportunity of harassing the English power in India was lost, but the verdict of Chatham's war has never been reversed. Even the Titanic genius of Napoleon, whose master ambition it was to do for France against England what Chatham had done for England against France, failed irretrievably to redress the balance. It is doubtful whether any war has produced greater results for the human race. The immediate result was to make England the most powerful of nations, and although the great schism after the American revolt diminished her power, it yet stands true that the British people possess two Empires which were won between 1756 and 1763. It is impossible to calculate the influence on the character of the race wrought by the rule of India; the commerce and wealth it ensures is the least of its benefits, the greatest is perhaps the practice in the art of disinterested government, the responsible treatment of complicated problems, the habit at once of obedience and com-

mand. The Indian Empire is as much a military despotism as any of the subject provinces of Rome, but it is administered in the interests of those who have no voice in the decision of its affairs. It is an absolutism tempered by the principles of Bentham. The transference of Canada from France to England was in some aspects an even more remarkable result of the war; the French had been settled there for a century and a half, and it is doubtful if the thought of conquering their whole dominion had been seriously entertained by any statesman however sanguine. It is often said that the first result of destroying the French power on the St. Lawrence was to invite the independence of the British colonies. This theory overlooks the fact that when the British colonies were fighting for independence, Canada was actually in the hands of the mother country, and therefore hostile, whereas if it had still been French it would have been an ally. The colonists could not have defeated the French without English aid, and so long as they feared French encroachment they needed the naval protection which England gave, but if after the war Canada had remained French, it is improbable that the Canadians would have assisted the English Government in a quarrel, and even if Canada were hostile, a hostile French Canada was no more to be feared by the Americans than a hostile British Canada. Nevertheless the British conquest of Canada has deeply affected the character and development of the American Republic; if a French dominion had existed across the St. Lawrence, the United States could hardly have

maintained so long that abstinence from European complications which has encouraged the emigration of men from all the old States and has made its population the most cosmopolitan in the world. Moreover, that ideal of policy which is called the Monroe Doctrine, embodying as it does an extensive and peculiar claim by the United States to preserve the New World from further encroachments by the Old, could never have been suggested by an English statesman, as it was, and would have proved infinitely more difficult of application, if a distinctively foreign Power had ruled the great northern dominion. The existence side by side of a British colony and a Republic separated from Britain, has been in the past a cause of friction, in the future it is still possible that it may be a cause of strife, but more probably the common sentiments of race will survive even the dividing memories of civil war. The English-speaking races possess in North America a sphere of influence and action that ensures for them a predominance among mankind, far more certain because the continent, however mixed its population, is governed from north to south on those principles of freedom, order, and progress, which won their way in the England of the seventeenth century.

As in India and America so in Europe, the war marked an era of incalculable importance. If the generalship of Ferdinand and the armies of Frederick assisted the conquest of Canada, the alliance of England under Pitt saved Prussia from annihilation. Not a single hamlet changed its allegiance as a result of all the battles that were fought, but Prussia's

heroic struggle paved the way for its great place among the nations. It had survived the attack of an unexampled coalition because the most powerful member of that coalition was engaged on sea and land by the forces of Great Britain. The German race found in Prussia a new centre of leadership and allegiance, and the House of Austria had found an unconquerable rival. But it was France whose position was chiefly affected by the war. The loss of India and Canada by France ruined the far-seeing plans of Colbert; it transferred to England advantages the full extent of which could not then be appreciated. When the discoveries of science annihilated distance, and by multiplying the value of colonies revolutionised the policy of nations, it was the fortune of England already to possess an Empire. The wars of the eighteenth century had provided a solution of the problems of the following years; had found new lands for an overflowing population, new markets for commerce, and new incentives against national exhaustion. Not until the insatiate rivalry of the last fifty years began could the gains of England and losses of France in the Seven Years' War be fully measured.

Thus, as the history of mankind unfolds, the international results of that administration by which Pitt raised England from despair to exaltation are seen to be ever greater. That is his certain title to undying fame. His influence in the sphere of domestic politics cannot be found in definite achievements, but must be sought rather in the vaguer region of sentiment and opinion. He was the very opposite

of a scientific statesman; his knowledge was not exact or comprehensive, but was confined to a few great principles, to what he called the Bible of English politics, which he reverenced as the necessary and sufficient charter of faith. Details were matters of business which he grasped clearly enough when in office, or when expounding any specific scheme, but his attention was given first to the principles involved. This was a period when problems of internal government were less agitated than problems of national policy, when the industrial revolution with its inevitable accompaniment of a State organised on democratic lines was not accomplished. Chatham is not to be credited with any prophetic foresight into the future; his whole nature was made for the high duty of leading the nation in times of peril, not for the patient and careful handling of complicated problems. But his career, with its sovereignty over the whole people, was a preparation for the democratic revolution. He welded together the United Kingdom, evoking the loyalty of Scotland, seeking the reconciliation of Ireland, and raised so high the pride and spirit of nationality that the deep wounds inflicted by the Stuart troubles were at last healed. Cromwell had been to many a hated usurper, the glories of Marlborough had been exploited in the interests of faction, Walpole had regarded the Whig party as the nation, but under Pitt England forgot her divisions. "He was a Minister given by the people to the King," and there was magic in that fact. In the midst of a period when what Disraeli called the Venetian Constitution was

at its zenith, when government was the perquisite of a Teutonic monarch, an aristocratic junto, and a corrupt Parliament, there appears this dazzling and supreme career of one who affronted venal Parliamentarians by his contemptuous honesty, who was separated by a great gulf from the aristocrats who mouthed the commonplaces of civil and religious liberty while they ruled a kingdom in the interests of a party, a politician who had "never read Wicquefort," never visited Lady Yarmouth till he was fifty, never hesitated to express an unflattering view of Herrenhausen and German Electors. If Pitt had done no more than grasp power there would be reason to remember a life that with no adventitious advantage ended at so great an elevation. What forces could he draw upon? The days of a press that could focus attention upon a brilliant personality were not yet come; the era of party organisation, of a public opinion guided and informed by widespread associations, had not dawned. It is comparatively easy for a man of force and persistency to capture the machine, but in Pitt's day the machine was not invented. It was not an age in which careers were open to talent, but genius made itself felt; it was not a revolutionary period when leaders were urgently sought, but Pitt's voice penetrated the closed door of Parliament and reached the ears of the people.

By appealing to the people, by incarnating in himself their power, and by making that power supreme, Chatham had disturbed the equipoise of the aristocratic system by introducing a new and

ultimately paramount force. He was gifted with the qualities of popular leadership; an instinctive sympathy with national feeling—that national feeling which induces in many men only an obstinate repugnance—a definite mind, a strong will, an imperious nature, a fearless invective, an oratory that embellished his profound and passionate patriotism. Although the debates in Parliament were only roughly reported, it is easy to understand how the pith of his speeches would be known throughout the nation; often we find that the sentiment of his great orations is expressed in some stirring phrase such as could be remembered by the people. The character of his oratory does not lend itself to literary disquisition; it was born in the hour of strenuous debate, as fire from iron, and less than any other oratory that is remembered does it smell of the lamp. An invective unequalled among the moderns, an invective that struck down the proudest of his contemporaries, a scorn that withered, a passion that scorched—even to-day the effect and force of these powers are not vanished from the pages which contain his words. That Chatham practised himself in that art of which he was so consummate a master is probable: he would not look on a bad print lest it should corrupt his taste; he remembered Demosthenes, and doubtless, as a sensible man, he studied the temper of his audience and knew how to produce his effects. But his prepared orations were, comparatively speaking, failures, and it was only when his blood was stirred, when his scorn or anger was roused, when art was forgotten and nature spoke,

that the true extent of his powers was displayed and his Promethean eloquence thrilled and subjugated all who heard. "When I am on my feet I speak everything that is in my mind," he said. Others have surpassed him in the forensic art of pleading, in the rhetorical art, and in literary graces, but Chatham, speaking everything that was in his mind, was the greatest antagonist in debate the British Parliament has known.

While the persuasive part of his speech was a kind of consummate conversation, expressed in sentences clear, simple, forceful, of an admirable rhythm, there were moments of sublimity and inspiration such as no other English orator has known, daring flights of imagination that held his audience with suspended breath. "His words," said Lyttleton, "have sometimes frozen my young blood into stagnation, and sometimes have made it pace in such a hurry through my veins that I could scarce support it." Grattan said finely, "Great subjects, great empires, great characters, effulgent ideas, and classical illustrations, formed the material of his speeches." A natural loftiness of mind was his most characteristic virtue; it was at times clouded over by passion and rivalry, but he loved best the contemplation of serious and noble things. It is clear from the detached sentences in his handwriting found among his papers that religion was to him a matter not merely of outward observance but of his innermost thought.* There were no doubt histrionic elements in his nature, but a profound sincerity was the true

**Chatham Correspondence*, iv., App. 3.

spring of his actions. He would have been still greater if all his conduct had been marked by perfect simplicity, but though his motives may have been obscured so that even Burke misunderstood them, they were of a noble kind. It was with genuine relief, if with an ostentation of Stoical content, that he laid his greatness by and sought relief and rest in a home where he could put his armour on one side and teach his children to love God and their country; it was by a supreme effort against the exhaustion of age and infirmity that he returned to warn his country against the awful destiny of separation.

Two phrases of his own best illustrate his character and his career. He speaks of that sense of honour which "makes ambition virtue," and he writes of those "who, wherever they are, carry their country along with them in their breast. I mean those feelings for its general honour, and those large and comprehensive sentiments for the common happiness of the whole, which everywhere, and more particularly in our island, constitute alone just patriotism." Chatham, dying in the midst of the Civil War he had tried to avert, is the last of those great men whom England and America can both claim; to both States he rendered signal service, and not the least part of that service is the memory of a nature moulded in the very form of honour, an eloquence never suborned to mean causes, a lover of his nation who immeasurably strengthened her power and elevated the ideals of her public life.

APPENDIX.

THE FAMILY COMPACT OF 1761.

THE one "historical mystery" in connection with Lord Chatham is the question how far he knew the terms of the secret treaty arranged between France and Spain in August, 1761, at the time of his resignation in October, 1761. There is a tradition that he had secret information, and imparted that information to the Cabinet. An article in the *Quarterly Review*, October, 1899, suggests that this information was received through Louis Dutens, secretary to the British embassy at Naples, where knowledge of Spanish plans might very probably be obtained. A copy of the treaty in the Newcastle papers is said, by the writer of this article, to bear marks of having passed through Pitt's office in Cleveland Row. I am unable to judge the probability of the last statement, but from other evidence I find it difficult to believe that Pitt placed before the Cabinet any exact information concerning the treaty. If he possessed the information himself, he must surely have imparted it to his colleagues. In published memoirs there is little evidence, but the *Newcastle Papers* contain much that bears directly and indirectly upon the question. It was known that a treaty between

France and Spain existed, but not that a breach with Great Britain and the invasion of Portugal were contemplated.

In his memorandum on the Cabinet of September 18, 1761, Newcastle mentions "Intercepted letters from Fuentes and Grimaldi," and "The *Convention* signed the 15th of August only."* But that nothing more than the *probability* of an intimate union between France and Spain had been disclosed is clear from the questions Hardwicke invites Newcastle to put to Stanley in his letter of September 30th.† At the next Cabinet of October 2d, Newcastle says that Pitt referred to "the papers he had in his bag (meaning my Lord Bristol's letter and Mr. Wall's paper)."‡ This must have been Bristol's letter of August 31st, which contained the accounts of Wall's admission that France had "spontaneously offered to unite her forces with those of Spain to prevent English encroachments in America on Spanish territory." Pitt may have used this admission as an argument that Spain meant war, but if he had possessed secret information would he not have lain other papers before the Cabinet? On October 13th, Hardwicke tells Newcastle that he has seen Pitt. "I observed that he did not assert the resolution of Spain to declare war against us nearly so strong as he did at the Council; but put it upon their secret union with France, and that they would assist France with money underhand."§ On October 20th, Newcastle has seen the Spanish ambassador: "I asked him whether they intended to break with us. He did not directly answer the question, but talked as if that could not be their intention as their

*Add. MSS. 32928, f. 228.

† *Ibid.*, f. 440. ‡ *Ibid.*, 32929, f. 18. § *Ibid.*, 32929, f. 227.

conduct had showed, notwithstanding their Family Treaty of 1743, which, he said, the last time I saw him, contained all the stipulations in this treaty with regard to their reciprocal engagements." * On December 1st the Comte de Mello, Portuguese ambassador to the Court of St. James's, communicated the news that France, Spain, and Naples had made a secret treaty, to which they demanded Portugal's accession, with the intention of closing the ports of the four nations against Great Britain. This was of course the secret design which Pitt dreaded, but it is placed beyond doubt that he did not communicate intelligence of it to his colleagues when we read Newcastle's comment upon this disclosure. "Our affairs with Spain seem bad. *I think Mello's account can't be true.*" †

The truth seems to be that, without special or secret knowledge, Pitt judged the future of Spanish policy better than his colleagues. There were indications visible to all the Ministers that France and Spain were united. Pitt declared that this meant war; his colleagues would not be convinced. When the rupture had come, Hardwicke made the following comment: "I am now convinced that the intercepted letter in the summer from Choiseul to D'Avrincourt in cypher, wherein mention was made of training on the negotiations between England and France till the latter end of September, when the flota should be arrived, deserved more weight to be laid upon it than we were willing to allow it at that time." ‡ This letter from Choiseul explains Pitt's eagerness to declare war on Spain before the flota of silver ships should arrive.

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* Add. MSS. 32929, f. 406.

† *Ibid.*, 32931, f. 425.

‡ *Ibid.*, 32932, f. 367.

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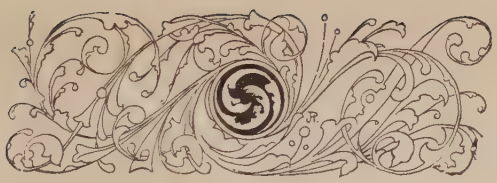

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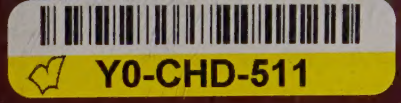
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